“Much Needed and Long Overdue”: An Analysis of the Aryan Women’s League and the White Power Movement of the 1980s and 1990s

Honors Research Thesis

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by

Lauren Jennings

The Ohio State University

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Project Advisers: Dr. Clayton Howard, Department of History
Dr. David Steigerwald, Department of History

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Introduction

Partners for the Cause: Women and the White Power Movement

When asked about the ideal relationship dynamic between Aryan men and women, Monique Wolfing replied, "once you have two counterparts working together you can't lose."[1] From her guest appearance on *Race and Reason* 1990, Wolfing did not reassure racist viewers that men should protect and provide for the family while women stayed home and kept house. Instead, she held that Aryan men and women should regard each other equally and respect the different talents each partner provided. Only then would the white race be able to overcome the threats posed by the Zion Occupied Government (ZOG) and nonwhite people. She believed that white men and women had to stand united in their fight against these threats. Tom Metzger, the head of the White Aryan Resistance (WAR) and the host of his cable-access show *Race and Reason*, agreed. Wolfing founded and headed the Aryan Women's League (AWL) in 1988, one of the first female hate groups dedicated to advancing the White Power Movement (WPM) of the 1980s and 1990s. From her position, Wolfing sought to expand the role that white women traditionally played in the hate movement, moving from silent women in Ku Klux Klan (KKK) auxiliaries to emboldened warriors fighting beside their men in the name of white power.

Wolfing's mission reveals the complex and often contradictory story of the women involved in the WPM of the eighties and nineties. In a movement dominated by men, Wolfing and like-minded women created an organization dedicated to carving out a unique space to discuss and solve "women's issues" in the area of white supremacy. The AWL held that women could act as both mothers and warriors to aid the white race. They rejected the idea that women in the movement only acted as wives "keeping house" and "raising children" while their

[1] Elinor Langer, "The American Neo-Nazi Movement Today," *The Nation*, July 16, 1990.

husbands attended Klan rallies, even as they also reaffirmed the importance of traditional "women's work."[2] At the same time, League members argued that white men and women had to work together in order to combat threats posed by ZOG and nonwhite people. These women and men feared that declining numbers of white children doomed the white race to extinction. Consequently, they argued that women needed to play a central role in their racist project. Women in the League served as mothers, sisters, and warriors within the movement, balancing the expectations between these contradictory roles. In doing so, they engaged in a range of tasks to grow and protect the white power community.

Accounts of the AWL's actions represent an unexplored avenue in this field of historical study. Recent work by historian Kathleen Belew has drawn attention to the violent nature of the WPM of the 1980s and 1990s. Losing the Vietnam War created a story of "government betrayal" that demonstrated "the irredeemable corruption of the American government."[3] Movement activists decided that the state could no longer protect their best interests, using the betrayal of the war to justify white revolution against it.[4] Racist men and women declared war on the American state in 1983 and employed a strategy of "leaderless resistance" to facilitate robberies, assaults, murder, and terrorism in the name of establishing an independent white state.[5] This wave of violence culminated in the 1995 Oklahoma City bombing by Timothy McVeigh. Belew has challenged the idea that these instances of violence were conducted by "lone wolf" actors. She argues, instead, that they resulted from a well-organized, paramilitary, masculine social movement.

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[2] "Cookbooks and Combat Boots," *Klanwatch Intelligence Report* 56 (June 1991): 7.
[3] Kathleen Belew, *Bring the War Home: The White Power Movement and Paramilitary America* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2018), 20, 24.
[4] Ibid., 2.
[5] Ibid., 4.

Previously, historians have described how white supremacists defined white women as symbols of purity and potential sources of children for white men to defend, kill, and die for.[6] Recent scholarship notes that female members performed "white womanhood" within and outside of the movement, which required women to take on roles as "social arbiters, using marriages and motherhood to bridge divides between different racist sects."[7] These women did not conform to stereotypes that many Americans hold about white supremacists. Many were educated, came from a range of socio-economic backgrounds, and joined the movement free from the influence of men.[8] Racist women have always been a "sustaining feature" of white nationalism, and in the 1980s and 1990s they expanded their roles as both mothers and warriors in their fight for white supremacy.[9]

Explicit acknowledgement of how white supremacist women advanced their position in the WPM should be the next step in the evolution of this field of study. White women worked in a variety of areas to enable the movement, ranging from having and taking care of children to participating in violence against nonwhite people. Even though white women did not always participate directly in the violence, their actions created a community that facilitated brutality against people of color in concrete ways. These women, seeing an avenue for their own interpretation and application of racist ideology, founded and led their own groups that spread hate on their terms with their own methods. Every avenue that they chose should therefore be analyzed seriously as a contributor to the violent legacy of the WPM, from active violence to the publication of children's literature.

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[6] Ibid., 176.
[7] Ibid., 180.
[8] Kathleen Blee, *Inside Organized Racism: Women in the Hate Movement* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2003), 9-10.
[9] Seyward Darby, *Sisters in Hate: American Women on the Front Lines of White Nationalism* (New York: Little, Brown and Company, 2020), 7.

Some scholars have questioned the usefulness of studying white supremacist women, considering the fact that they follow an extreme, racist, and misogynistic ideology seemingly antithetical to their interests as defined by the feminist movement. In response to the similar treatment of women on the far right, many scholars and journalists have spoken about conservative women as having a "false consciousness." According to historian Michelle Nickerson, this means that some academics believe that women on the right could not identify "the true combination of political, social, and economic forces determining circumstances of their lives."[10] Because the problems that conservative women identify as significant to their lives do not align with the issues that feminists and other left-leaning people consider important, academics have written conservative women off as not worthy of study because they are fundamentally "wrong" about the world. This remains true with white supremacist women, who even more than right-wing women have been written off as "crazy" for following an extremely racist and misogynistic ideology. Yet disregarding white supremacist women because of their beliefs does not erase the fact that they acted on their ideology, nor does it eliminate the harm that they inflicted on nonwhite communities. White supremacist women created a world that they sustained through their labor, and historians cannot understand the full scope of the WPM without acknowledging their roles in it.

The history of the AWL reveals the flaws of analyzing white supremacist women by using the concept of false consciousness. Each chapter of this thesis will dispute the idea that these women are unimportant to study because of their extreme beliefs. Chapter One discusses the origins of the Aryan Women's League in 1988. Prior to the foundation of the League, women acted as part of auxiliaries within white power groups led primarily by men. While some leaders

[10] Michelle Nickerson, *Mothers of Conservatism: Women and the Postwar Right* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2012), 169.

of white power groups advocated for women to take on leadership roles and recruited women into the WPM, other men dismissed them. Even the men who favored involving women in the WPM depicted them as victims of Jewish people or people of color, often in need of rescue and denying them greater agency. The lack of respected outlets of expression specifically for women during beginning phases of the WPM helps to explain why women founded and joined the AWL. Members of the League operated on similar platforms to men, insofar as they promoted white supremacy to save the Aryan race from the apocalyptic threat of extinction. In doing so, they took on a dual and sometimes contradictory role as both "white sisters" and "Aryan women warriors."

Chapter Two discusses how the AWL defined "white sisterhood," a concept that members used to promote women's reproductive labor and community building. "White sisters" united by the League defined themselves as an exclusive group dedicated to promoting families, monogamy, and community within the WPM. As white sisters, their reproductive labor provided the work necessary to sustain life in the movement.[11] It entailed raising children in ZOG-free environments, caring for wounded men, and providing emotional support to prisoners of war (POWs). In doing so, they reaffirmed their willingness to collaborate with men for the good of the WPM. In this way, League members worked at tasks traditionally attributed to women to ensure the success of the WPM.

In addition to accepting a role as "white sisters" within the movement, League members also promoted their identities as "Aryan women warriors." Chapter Three discusses the strengths and limitations of that identity given how League members defined themselves as "support groups" for the men. In spite of their calls for women to act violently in the name of white

[11] Laura Briggs, *How All Politics Became Reproductive Politics: From Welfare Reform to Foreclosure to Trump* (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2017), 2.

power, it seemed that both their practical methods of violence and the people who most clearly threatened them differed from the League's definition. Women of the AWL justified taking violent action in self-defense against nonwhite people who threatened themselves and their white communities. They specially emphasized rape as a threat unique to white women and painted themselves as capable of fighting back against them on behalf of the WPM. In practice, however, women remained in limited "supporting roles" when committing violence, working with men to target nonwhite people but refraining from committing the violence themselves. Even though white women identified men of color as the most prominent danger to them, the movement men they worked with provided an even greater threat to their safety.

Historians face important challenges when they study groups like the AWL. By its secretive, underground nature, finding sources from the organization proved challenging. The constant threat of investigation and arrest from authorities encouraged groups across the WPM to hide or destroy documentation of their work. For this reason, League documents beyond published literature like recruitment flyers and newsletters are hard to come by. Members also used pseudonyms to disguise their identity; "Monique Wolfing" might even be an alias, according to some sources.[12] Exact membership rosters and even the identities of key leaders are thus obscured. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic made archival work in 2020 almost impossible. Although documents from the Wilcox Collection of Contemporary Political Movements at the Spencer Research Library in Lawrence, Kansas are included, the pandemic limited time in the archives needed to study them all adequately. This project, although it focuses primarily on the AWL, sometimes relies on the stories of like-minded women in the hate

[12] Jessie Daniels, *White Lies: Race, Class, Gender and Sexuality in White Supremacist Discourse* (New York: Routledge, 1997), 62.

movement who may or may not have had affiliations with the League where direct sources are insufficient.

Nevertheless, this project represents one of the first attempts to trace the origin and impact of the Aryan Women's League. Members of the League created a space dedicated to discussing and solving "women's issues" in a masculine social movement. They worked to unite white women together, and the labor they performed helped to build a white power community of men and women committed to strengthening the white race. AWL members also fought alongside men to protect this community from nonwhite threats. At each step in this process, the ways that white supremacist women formed a world for the WPM becomes clear. Historians need to acknowledge the ways that women in the AWL sustained the WPM in order to fully understand the movement itself.

Chapter One

More Than a Kaffeeklatsch: How White Women Created Their Own Role in the White Power Movement of the 1980s and 1990s

On January 20th, 1990, several white supremacist groups blanketed the town and surrounding area of Fullerton, California with racist and anti-Semitic publications. Racist activists littered mailboxes and doorsteps with their literature, frightening town residents. The identified groups included WAR, the Aryan White Separatists, the Western Hammer Skinheads, and notably the AWL.[1] In response, approximately 150 people protested against the white supremacist literature on February 4th, 1990. The peaceful demonstration attracted people from all walks of life, from area grandmothers to about 70 members of the Set Free Christian motorcycle club. Yet the marchers, one of whom gave her reason for demonstrating as to prove that "this hate stuff is just wrong," did not realize the significance of the AWL's literature.[2] Here, the AWL spread their message alongside the men to promote their stances regarding white supremacy. This represented a growing acceptance of and independence for white women in the hate movement.

The League's distribution of its own hate literature alongside other mostly male white power groups reveals the roots of a growing role that racist white women played in the White Power Movement (WPM) of the 1980s and 90s. Long regarded merely as a series of unrelated violent actions by radicalized individual white men, the WPM in this era has only recently been recognized as a true movement that united a variety of individual hate groups.[3] White women did a variety of work in the name of white power. Sometimes these women engaged in violence; at other points they engaged in the "invisible work" that women around the world have long

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[1] Donna Davis, "Christian Groups Protest Anti-Semitism," *The Orange County Register*, February 5, 1990.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Belew, *Bring the War Home*, 1.

completed without recognition.[4] Sociologist Kathleen Blee claimed that racist women, "convinced that a more terrible fate awaits them and their children if they don't fight for white and Aryan rights," identified the WPM as representative of their best interests.[5] Their involvement meant that female activists both fought in the WPM and supported the male members to do so as well. In one AWL publication, for example, contributors included depictions of a white woman taking an axe to indigenous "home invaders"; the next page advertised a dating column the AWL ran for "race-conscious" readers.[6] These women expanded the reach of the WPM, helping to spread how white power literature, ideology, and violence reached other Americans.

Women in the White Power Movement Prior to the Aryan Women's League

Women's activism grew out of a new kind of hate movement that emerged from the disillusionment and paramilitarism inspired by the Vietnam War. Largely composed of Vietnam War veterans and their sympathizers who felt they had been "betrayed" by a bulky, oppressive, and incompetent federal government, these men differed from past white supremacist movements because they declared war on the American state.[7] Concerned for the survival of the white race, these men came from a variety of hate groups that professed different belief systems, including the Klan, skinheads, and Neo-Nazis. Despite their differences, however, members shared paramilitary strategies, movement literature, and a network of underground cells dedicated to undermining the American state through violent revolution.[8] Racist activists banded

[4] Laura Briggs, *How All Politics Became Reproductive Politics*, 2.
[5] "Author Kathleen Blee Discusses the Role of Women in White Supremacist Groups," *Intelligence Report* (March 2002).
[6] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 5, 11-12.
[7] Belew, *Bring the War Home*, 3.
[8] Ibid., 4.

together to commit a litany of violent crimes, ranging from armed robbery to assassination, including the murder of critic Alan Berg.[9] These attacks, often written off by the media as perpetrated by lone-wolf actors, culminated in the 1995 attack on the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City.[10] Together, groups in the White Power Movement used violence to try to topple the United States government.

Women's activism in white supremacy, however, has been historically rooted in perceived domestic threats to white American lives. In the forties, fifties, and sixties, white women played key roles in upholding segregation across the United States. According to Elizabeth Gillespie McRae, "female grassroots activists sustained and reproduced segregation in their communities" in a way "so interwoven into daily life that it appeared unremarkable."[11] Acting as mothers trying to protect their children from "propaganda … antagonistic to the white philosophy of life," these women provided the nationwide grassroots support needed to oppose integration and instill segregationist values in their children and communities, perpetuating white supremacy.[12] They signed petitions, edited textbooks, protested busing, and employed countless other methods to continuously resist integration decades after *Brown v. Board of Education*.

The hard-won successes of the Civil Rights Movement, however, shifted the landscape of American politics regarding racial justice. The American public broadly deemed overt acts of racial discrimination no longer acceptable, and white supremacists needed to modify their language so as to avoid mentions of race in their complaints. In the eighties and nineties, the women of the WPM operated in a country they felt to be too sympathetic to the rights of

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[9] Belew, *Bring the War Home*, 122.
[10] Ibid., 2.
[11] Elizabeth Gillespie McRae, *Mothers of Massive Resistance: White Women and the Politics of White Supremacy*, (New York, New York: Oxford University Press, 2018), 10.
[12] Ibid., 1-2.

minority groups, and that the white race would decline as a result of government-sanctioned promotion of the rights of undeserving minority groups over those of superior white people. Members of the AWL later pointed to programs that they believed, like their forebears, would harm their children as reason to join the WPM. One AWL recruitment flier listed "affirmative action quotas that discriminate against Whites" and "brain washing … by the schools … of White youth with racial self-hatred and genocidal race-mixing propaganda" as reasons to join the WPM.[13]

In the eighties and nineties, white supremacist women also began to take on positions of leadership in both co-ed and women-only organizations, a significant break from the "unremarkable" segregationists of the fifties. More women began joining official hate groups partly due to enough men in positions of leadership targeting racist women for recruitment. Although women had unofficially served as members of auxiliary groups for decades, the KKK opened its doors officially to female recruits in the late 1970s.[14] One Klan leader, commenting on the increasing number of women allowed into the group as official leaders, claimed that "we can't afford to not let them have whatever positions they want to work for."[15] Recruiters viewed white women as a potential member that brought in the rest of the family to join.[16] When a married man joined without his wife, racist activists feared she would cause him to leave. By enticing a married woman to join, the whole family would then be forced into staying.[17]

The rationale that male leaders relied on for encouraging white women to join hate groups was based off misogynistic stereotypes of white women. Nevertheless, they joined the

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[13] "A Challenge to White People," 1989, 76.26/Hall Hoag 287, John Hay Library, Brown University, Providence, RI.
[14] Helen Zia, "White Power Women: From the Ku Klux Klan to Skinheads, Bigotry Crosses the Gender Gap," *The Washington Post*, April 7, 1991.
[15] Blee, *Inside Organized Racism*, 147.
[16] Ibid., 147.
[17] Ibid., 147.

movement and filtered into positions of leadership. Darlene Carver, for example, the wife of the Georgia KKK's Grand Dragon, acted as a KKK Grand Secretary and sometimes filled in for her husband: "When Dan couldn't wear his robes, everyone followed me. Whatever I said, they'd do, men, women, and all."[18]

Despite this claim of solidarity, male members expressed misogyny and distrust about the inclusion of white women. Some men ignored their input altogether. Others held on to conservative views about women's roles; these men viewed white power groups as "brotherhoods" not necessarily accommodating to women in the realm outside the home.[19] Male members who treated "women's problems" as "outside the scope" of racial issues consistently hampered women's participations within coed groups.[20] And, while women like Darlene Carver began to hold positions of power, the vast majority of leadership positions in coed groups fell consistently to men.

Portrayals of white women by WAR demonstrated the paradox of needing female activists' participation while also denying them meaningful equality. WAR, founded by the influential and demagogic Tom Metzger, spoke and wrote about women in their newsletter (aptly entitled *WAR* as well). The propaganda produced by WAR typically reflected the perspectives of male members more so than of female members. Instead, the women-centric content that members of WAR published reflected how they felt they should behave, or how white men should treat white women in danger. Most often, female activists in *WAR* were portrayed in vulnerable or sexualized images. Frequently in the cartoons included within the newsletters, white women were sketched often as victims of leering, predatory caricatures of African

[18] Zia, "White Power Women."
[19] Blee, *Inside Organized Racism*, 144.
[20] Ibid., 146.

Americans, struggling helplessly while white men look on, admonished to do something to protect "their" women.[21] They did not encourage the female activists themselves fighting back; instead, they admonished the man to act on her behalf.

WAR only briefly addressed the role white women should play according to their ideology in its publication. On a page labelled "White Aryan Resistance Positions" in each newsletter, writers included small blurbs detailing WAR's positions on such topics as race, religion, the environment, and abortion. On the subject of (assumedly white) "Women," they wrote:

> WAR recognizes the basic difference between male and female. Beyond that, WAR encourages women to involve themselves to the limit of their abilities to further the interests of the race. Qualified women operate at all levels of WAR. Most attitudes toward women are handed down by the major religions of Moslem, Judaism, and Judeo-Christianity. These belief structures are anti-Aryan. The Judaised concept of women is the most obscene. The Aryan male and female are a team.[22]

Contrary to the idea that racism and misogyny always go hand in hand, WAR's racism as expressed in their newsletters helped to promote "equal opportunity" for female members interested in the movement. And while WAR advocated for white women to have more white children, they did not "promote force" against them to accomplish this goal; the white women must agree to participate in this ideology.[23] A team meant to work together, WAR allowed women to work and operate in leadership roles not limited to forced or unwanted motherhood.

Yet this blurb, while it paid lip service to the idea that white men and women needed to work together in order to succeed, did not detail specifically how interested women could

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[21] *WAR*, March 1996, 6, RH WL G2157 Folder 1, WAR Newsletters, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.
[22] *WAR*, July 1996, 11, RH WL G2157 Folder 1, WAR Newsletters, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.
[23] *WAR*, November 1994, RH WL G2157 Folder 1, WAR Newsletters, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

become involved in the movement or what they could do once members. Furthermore, half of the sentences in the blurb targeted people of color for their "anti-Aryan" constructions of womanhood, which the authors did not detail. Equally used to flesh out WAR's basic position on female activists in the movement and to condemn racial and religious minorities, the blurb barely recognized white women as true contributors to the movement.

Aside from this short paragraph, WAR's perspectives on the active role female racists should play in the movement did not get published with any regularity. The majority of articles published in *WAR* focused on the threats that white men allegedly faced in the world; these problems ranged from nonwhite individuals laying claim to jobs white men "deserved" to their culture being "tainted" by non-Aryans. Headlines consistently called for white men to "wake up!" to the "realities" of people of color, Jewish people, and LGBTQ individuals taking over popular culture and jobs historically viewed as the property of white men.[24] WAR admonished men to take action against problems primarily affecting them. White women appear in secondary roles, primarily as the unwitting or unwilling sexual partners of racial minorities, lacking the power to remove themselves from danger and relying on the men in the movement to aid them.

When the contributors to *WAR* did encourage white women to take action, they sometimes insulted them. One writer captioned a photograph of a housewife, replete with an apron, scowl, and hand on her hip, with "don't just bitch! Call a radio talk show today!"[25] By using this expletive to describe how women allegedly complain, the contributor demeaned their concerns on the basis of their gender. As a general rule, in spite of the lip service given to the active inclusion of white women by WAR, authors of racist literature still employed a variety of

[24] *WAR*, April 1996, 7, RH WL G2157 Folder 1, WAR Newsletters, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.
[25] *WAR,* April 1996, 7, RH WL G2157 Folder 1, WAR Newsletters, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

demeaning and marginalizing methods of including female members in the movement, when they were included at all. These articles did not broach the subject of the role of female activists acting on behalf of their own bodies, ideology, or race. They only dictated how white women should generally behave in order to become "good Aryans."

Although these writers often diminished the agency and power of women, some male contributors to *WAR* proved the exceptions to this rule. One series of articles tried to inspire female readers with histories of Aryan womanhood. One example detailed the histories of white women, centered on Queen Boadicea, an old English ruler. The story distilled a heroic and self-sacrificing image of a warrior for female readers to emulate.[26]After her husband died, invaders massacred Queen Boadicea's kingdom and people, raping her two daughters and whipping her as well. In retaliation, she raised and led an army against the attackers before ultimately committing suicide instead of letting them take her prisoner. WAR published several articles similar to Queen Boadicea's story, utilizing profiles of European historical figures to attempt to inspire pride in women warriors with a romanticized version of Aryan history. However, this story still related a certain dependence that women had on white men. Boadicea only seems to come into this power after her husband died, not while he stayed alive. While her story implies that white women have the ability and strength to fight battles against similar "invading enemies" of the WPM, doing so only after all male protectors die implies that their agency comes only as a last resort instead of necessary to the movement from the beginning.

Only a few articles pushed for the inclusion of women as equal members of WAR and other white power groups. A writer who called himself Baxter the Pagan provided one such article in defense of their presence. In an article excoriating movement activists who stood

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[26] Edward Kerling, "Aryan Women Warriors," *WAR,* May 1995, RH WL G2157 Folder 1, WAR Newsletters, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

against the formation of the AWL, Baxter claimed that "Aryan women are most beautiful when they are in battle … . Any man who feels threatened by his woman if she wages a few battles of her own might as well hang it up because he is no man at all, let along [sic] a White Warrior!"[27] Mirroring the story of Queen Boadicea, Baxter provided a full-throated support of white women's right to be in the movement so they could accomplish their racist goals. Attacking the masculinity of those who opposed the inclusion of white women, Baxter nevertheless represented a male perspective on the value of white women in the movement. Regaling them as "beautiful" warriors, while complementary, still indicated the sexual preferences of a white man towards white women to justify their place in the movement. The continued reliance on male perspectives, whether actively supporting or marginally acknowledging their role in WAR and the broader WPM, inhibited depictions of white women taking active control over their own bodies and ideologies.

WAR's treatment of women's issues, perspectives, and voices displayed why some members felt that they needed a female-centric organization to promote their own voices. Periodically, however, articles likely written by women got published in editions of *WAR*. These articles demonstrated a measured difference in the tone of how white women were addressed and the expectations conferred on them. In the early 80s, when WAR published its newsletter under the title "White American Resistance," one article fell in line with the political cartoons that decried the vulnerability of white women to attacks by nonwhite men, but instead advocated that women actively defend themselves. This article, written under the pseudonym Marcia Brunner, advised readers on how to "illegally" conceal unsheathed combat knives in plastic bags as a

[27] Blee, *Inside Organized Racism*, 146.

precaution against attackers.[28] She recommended brands including Tekna, BenchMark, and Dingo, and referred to them as "anti-rape knives."[29] Although laws governing carrying concealed knives differed from state to state, Brunner adamantly claimed that what she advocated for broke the law, acknowledging that her choice "is to arm myself with an illegally hidden knife to in order to defend myself if I must."[30] Here, she extolled the virtues of women defending themselves from unwanted attacks. Instead of the helpless damsel in the innumerable cartoons regularly published in *WAR*, Brunner's story treated white women as agents capable of protecting themselves from non-white attackers. The same story, now written from a woman's perspective, depicted female members violently defending themselves, putting them on similar footing with male members.

Birth of the Aryan Women's League

Movement men, even those open to women's participation, generally depicted them in roles that limited the actions they could take. Whether in need of a man's rescue or berated for "bitching," white women lacked agency, action, and defined roles within the movement beyond a symbol to protect. White women, when given the opportunity to speak in racist publications, demonstrated how they could act as equal, committed, and capable members in the fight for white rights. Prior to the late 80s, however, spaces that harnessed this dedication did not widely exist for racist women in the WPM.

Frustrated with the lack of roles for white women in the movement and driven by their own support for white supremacist ideology, the Aryan Women's League (AWL) formed in the

[28] Marcia Brunner, "At the Ready: The Bag Lady," *White American Resistance*, 1983, RH WL Eph 2198.1, WAR Ephemeral Materials, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.
[29] Ibid.
[30] Ibid.

late 1980s as a group affiliated with WAR. Scholars have had trouble uncovering the specific details of the AWL's foundation. Historian Kathleen Belew argues that Kathleen Metzger, the wife of Tom Metzger, ran the organization as an offshoot of WAR in the late 80s.[31] However, newspaper reports as well as literature produced by the AWL also claim that a woman named Monique Wolfing founded the organization in 1988. One source, furthermore, claims that "Monique Wolfing" is in fact an alias.[32] As the WPM at the time operated in secret, disguising names, member rolls, and documents, a level of ambiguity of the AWL's formation is expected and requires more research.

Even though specific details of the founding remain ambiguous, the goals of the AWL recount clearly the reasons that radicalized female racists created the League. In part, their rationale bore striking resemblance to that of WAR. The League operated on a platform promoting white supremacy in an effort to "save [their] noble Aryan race" from the threats of miscegenation and "weakening" Aryan spirits.[33] In this way, white women founded the AWL for similar reasons that male white supremacists founded white power groups at this time. According to reporting conducted by Darlene Himmelspach of the *San Diego Union-Tribune*, white women joined the AWL "because they are fearful of losing something they have … . Now they are competing with illegal aliens and blacks (for rights)."[34] Fear of this "decline" of the white race served as a motivating factor in forming the AWL.

Similar to WAR's goals in its propaganda, the AWL also claimed that in order to "secure the existence of our people and a future for White children," men and women had to work together to fight against the threat the minority groups posed and convince other white people to

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[31] Belew, *Bring the War Home*, 166-167.
[32] Daniels, *White Lies*, 62.
[33] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 5, 2.
[34] Darlene Himmelspach, "Aryan Women's League is Aided," *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, May 6, 1989.

join their cause.[35] They advocated cooperation in their literature, writing that "the Aryan Women's League is not an organization separate from our male counterparts in the racial movement, but rather an extension."[36] Meant to work together in order to secure a safe world for their children, the AWL and WAR seemed to agree that "equal-opportunity" organizations best constituted ways for the white race as a whole to survive.

Why, then, did the AWL form as a women-only group, if they placed so much emphasis on men and women working together? Some male activists in the WPM like John Metzger, son of WAR founder Tom Metzger, claimed that the group would be separate merely because "they like to appeal to women."[37] Words from the leaders of the AWL, however, tell a different story. Himmelspach quoted Wolfing on her aims to recruit serious, "race-conscious" women already interested to some extent in the WPM to the AWL, not just "women" in general.[38] One recruitment flyer boasted that the AWL would provide an alternative to female members who feel disrespected by men in the movement, lack a place in the movement, and feel that their time was not being used constructively.[39] Promising a "definite place in the struggle for Victory" to women, the AWL appealed to those who felt disrespected because of the lack of positions for women in other hate groups.[40] The simple fact that white women did not have many sanctioned outlets of expression to talk about "women's issues" during the initial phases of the WPM helps to explain why they joined the AWL and why it formed as a separate group in the first place.

In spite of motivations that seem in line with those of feminist organizations, this does not mean that AWL's leaders molded themselves in the image of the women's movement of the

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[35] *White Sisters,* Issue No. 2, 4.
[36] *White Sisters,* Issue No. 2, ii.
[37] Himmelspach, "Aryan Women's League is Aided."
[38] Ibid.
[39] Blee, *Inside Organized Racism*, 121.
[40] Ibid., 121.

1960s and 70s.[41] Members of the League generally talked about feminism in surface-level terms, and the women of the AWL clearly regarded it with disdain. They complained that feminism allegedly discouraged unity between men and women, and that it advocated for women to enter a sphere of influence that only men could correctly occupy.[42] Lynn Metzger, Tom Metzger's daughter and AWL member, referred to it as a "conspiracy" encouraged by Jewish people to drive dissension between white men and women.[43] While the feminist movement expressed many different ideas about the gender roles men and women could occupy, the League's perception of it still mattered.[44] Their analysis of the problems with the women's movement led white supremacists to reject the solutions it presented to the misogyny that racist women still faced. Instead, white women involved with the AWL identified different "threats" that minority groups, Jewish people, and LGBTQ people presented to the white race. According to members of the AWL, these groups posed the largest threat to their own best interests. Viewing the feminist movement as completely antithetical to their goals as an organization and as a race, members of the League rejected it.

Although the AWL stereotyped the women's movement, they shared feminists' vision of equality with men; they simply defined equality differently. Wolfing herself declared an openness to cooperation with other groups that supported the white race, regardless of their gender makeup. She even called the assumption that men and women in the movement should not work together a media ploy.[45] Yet in their ideology, Wolfing and other anti-feminist women of the AWL identified minority groups and not patriarchal institutions as the primary threat to

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[41] Himmelspach, "Aryan Women's League is Aided."
[42] For a similar concern about feminism among activists on the far right, see Robert Self, *All in the Family: The Realigning of American Democracy Since the 1960s* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2012), 276-278.
[43] Himmelspach, "Aryan Women's League is Aided."
[44] For differences among feminists, see Self, *All in the Family*, 104-105.
[45] Himmelspach, "Aryan Women's League is Aided."

white women. Despite the disrespect they sometimes received from white men, women of the League believed that they needed to work together in order to protect the white race from the greater threat that Jews and nonwhite people posed.

When translating their racist ideology to action, however, the AWL took a contradictory stance on the activities white women needed to engage in. Equality to the League sometimes meant that white men and women had the same responsibility to defend the white race from threats that would mean its destruction, and that men and women had to work together on "masculine activities" in order to accomplish their goal. According to Wolfing, the AWL was "not a kaffeeklatsch – we get our hands just as dirty as the men."[46] Dismissing women not serious about their commitment to the WPM, Wolfing maintained that her organization would not passively sit by and watch men prepare for battle. In doing so, the AWL did not function symbolically as a place for the wives and girlfriends of white supremacists to gather together and chat regularly. They would shun the "petty jealousies and gossip" that Wolfing saw as the downfall of other groups dominated by women.[47] Wolfing founded the group with the conviction that, according to Lynn Metzger, they would "work with [their] men totally," contrary to how they perceived the operations of feminist organizations.[48] This conviction meant that in whatever capacity, from the battlefield to the education of white children, white women aimed to work with the male members in an equal capacity.

Within the newly-formed AWL, women sometimes took on duties separate from those expected from male members. Dorothy Miles, a white supremacist praised by the AWL for her service to the movement expressed this contradiction. Lauded as a "true Aryan woman" by the

[46] Ibid.
[47] Zia, "White Power Women."
[48] Zia, "White Power Women."

AWL, Miles advised others to "be the natural woman. Each sex has values different to each other but these are not in conflict but they strengthen the other mutually."[49] "Being the natural woman" often took the form of the "invisible" work women have historically undertaken, most notably in the form of childcare. The AWL's literature emphasized the virtues of raising white children. Some tracts advised women on how to best care for their kids, and one AWL supporter wrote about the benefits juices would provide for their families.[50] League publications also highlighted the importance of white women's ability to give birth and raise children to the wider movement. Robert Miles, Dorothy's husband, wrote that because white women bear white children, they "are our most precious assets" and that "the scoffing of the thoughtless ones of [their] own race" should not disillusion female activists.[51] This praise underscores how AWL members viewed the "women's work" of childcare: while separate from duties activists expected men to perform, the labor of white women should not be diminished.

Conclusion

The AWL claimed around 400 members from around the world by 1991. These women felt the need for a group dedicated wholly to the issues faced by and perspectives shared by racist white women.[52] They centered projects on raising families, which they carried out by producing literature, guides, clothes, and toys for young families. They provided an outlet for racist activists to work in the WPM on issues they regarded as important, and unlike WAR, these women controlled the message of their group. Their newsletter, *White Sisters*, provided an outlet for their platform to reach other racists and interested parties. Although they worked closely with WAR

[49] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 5, 10.
[50] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 5, 22.
[51] *White Sisters*, Issue. No. 5, 13.
[52] Zia, "White Power Women."

and other men in the movement, white women fought for their own issues and perspectives. And although they worked for a posture of equality with male members of the movement, white women also took pride in the roles “unique” to their gender, which allowed them to be both warriors and mothers. The perspectives expressed in their publications allowed for more varied sketches of the women, more female voices to be heard in the publishing process, and for the little-understood, complicated role of white women in the WPM to manifest as the threat that it is.

Chapter Two

Hate Takes a Village: Nurturing Community in the White Power Movement

In 2001, Corinna Olsen, a self-described "loner" for her entire life, sought closure after her skinhead brother's death. After googling "what are skinheads?" to learn more about her brother's life, she found the racist website *Stormfront*. Her grief brought her into contact with members of the hate movement, and she sought community with other hardcore racists in Kalispell, Montana.[1] April Gaede, a lifelong member of white power associations, advocated for fellow white nationalists to move to Kalispell as part of the Pioneer Little Europe (PLE) movement. She encouraged white women to transform the town into an idyllic home for people with "happy white families" and "good, wholesome, smiling people" who wanted to raise their children like they did "back in the 50s."[2] According to journalist Seyward Darby, Olsen "wanted to be in a group like that," one proud of the community they lived in and the support they provided to each other.[3] Gaede, whom Olsen described as a "racist Martha Stewart," provided the push Corinna needed to move to Kalispell. Gaede met her potential recruit at the local International House of Pancakes (IHOP) and discussed what the women in town did together.[4] When Olsen moved her family, she failed to land a new job, and Gaede opened her home to her.[5] Because of Gaede's support, Olsen moved to Kalispell and pursued a "nice, white life" where she talked about things like "cooking, raising children, and other mundane topics" with other women.[6]

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[1] Darby, *Sisters in Hate*, 59.
[2] Ibid., 63-64.
[3] Ibid., 64.
[4] Ibid., 64.
[5] Ibid., 65.
[6] Ibid., 64.

Women in white supremacist organizations, however, were expected to conform to rigid sex and gender roles that emphasized having children and raising them in families headed by heterosexual couples. Over the course of their living together, Gaede learned of several aspects of Olsen's life that made her a less desirable friend in the movement. Olsen, for example, had a tubal ligation after having her last child and expressed disinterest in reversing the procedure.[7] She also had once engaged in amateur pornography, which tied her to what many movement members decried as a deplorable industry that drew husbands away from their wives and children. When that fact became publicized, Gaede "told her houseguest that she was no longer welcome."[8] Soon after, Olsen and her children moved away from Kalispell, fearing that the white supremacists in Kalispell would try to transform her daughters "into really miserable breeding stock."[9] Olsen's support for the movement broke down as well. Within a year, further disillusioned by the lack of friendships and interpersonal connections she once had, Olsen had grown weary of the WPM. Frustrated and alienated from her former compatriots, she worked as an informant for the FBI before exiting the movement.

Olsen's story illustrates the importance white power activists placed on reproductive labor to build a strong, self-reliant white power community as a bulwark against people and sexual practices they believed split men and women apart. It demonstrates the ways that white women forged these bonds as mothers, housewives, friends and sources of support for themselves. The Aryan Women's League committed themselves to creating a united, exclusive white sisterhood dedicated to taking care of white families and white communities through reproductive labor. Historian Laura Briggs defines reproductive labor as "the work necessary to

[7] Ibid., 68.
[8] Ibid., 69.
[9] Ibid., 70.

the reproduction of human life."[10] Such labor does not solely revolve around the nine-month time period taken to produce a child. It also includes "feeding people; caring for the sick, the elderly, and those who cannot work; creating safety and shelter; building community and kin relationships; and attending to people's psychic and spiritual well-being"; the white women of the League partook in all of these essential yet overlooked labors.[11] The AWL, as one of the few White Power groups run for and by women, demonstrated unique ways in how members used reproductive labor to build the community necessary for white supremacy.

The most important kind of reproductive labor performed by the League was their commitment to connecting activists to one another. The AWL worked to create the community they fought for in the here and now, using forms of reproductive labor ranging from providing advice on raising children to keeping in contact with POWs. Darby, writing almost thirty years after the founding of the AWL, noted that "hate takes a village. A seeker finds a creed and a community … delivering the validation that they've been craving all along."[12] The women of the League proudly claimed that they were "a support group" that would work with any interested white power group, pivotal in upholding white supremacy even in nonviolent forms.[13] Without this sense of kinship, the WPM might lose the core of what they fought for – continuation of the white race through the connection of "racially-conscious" families and activists, which created a community they felt was worth their struggle.

The Ideology of White Sisterhood

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[10] Briggs, *How All Politics Became Reproductive Politics*, 2.
[11] Ibid., 2.
[12] Darby, *Sisters in Hate*, 39.
[13] Monique Wolfing, "What is the Aryan Women's League," 1989, 76.26/Hall Hoag 287, John Hay Library, Brown University, Providence, RI.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, contributors to AWL publications used the concept of white sisterhood to define women's roles in the movement. Their use of the term illuminates their ideology around reproductive labor and community building. In promoting the idea of a "sisterhood," the AWL advocated for racist women to unite white women in an exclusive group that helped nurture the white power community. They provided advice and encouraged women to raise white children in monogamous families. However, their labor also included taking care of the injured and providing emotional support for prisoners. In these cases, even if they did not fight or commit illegal activities, women worked in masculine spaces in ways they deemed specifically acceptable for women. When members of the AWL used the term "white sisterhood," they demonstrated the positive terms with which they viewed "women's work." Together, members of the League lionized the work that feminists might view as sexist. Yet by choosing the identity of "white sisters," women of the League embraced this labor in their ideology as key to the WPM's success.

Members of the AWL valued a close-knit and like-minded association of women. They viewed such an alliance as fundamental to the success of the WPM. League members employed terms like "sister" and "sisterhood" to try to unify white supremacist women together in a way that felt both necessary and timely. The introductory page in two editions of *White Sisters* established that "we most importantly will attempt to unite and draw together dedicated and determined women from around the white world to form a true white sisterhood, which is much needed and long overdue!"[14] In creating this sisterhood, the AWL identified and filled a longstanding gap among white supremacist organizations. Prospective recruits had to be "racially conscious," dedicated to family, to the environment, to "their men," and to adding to the white

[14] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 5, ii.

race.[15] Since they saw the extinction of the white race as an apocalyptic and immediate threat to them, the term "sister" implied that a woman would devote her life to having children and providing reproductive labor to the rest of the WPM as a means of reversing this existential threat.

They built this tightknit sisterhood against an "other," and the League made clear that only a select group of dedicated white women stood a chance of entering into the sisterhood. They specifically differentiated themselves from feminists and Jews. Both groups received the wrath of the AWL in part because League members assumed that they attempted to separate white men from white women. They saw feminists as a threat to the foundations of how the League operated as a "support group."[16] Feminists, according to League members, sought to drive a wedge between white women and white men in a widespread "conspiracy" that would weaken the overall power of the white race.[17] White sisters, on the other hand, worked with white men, relying on each sex's unique abilities to strengthen white families, white communities, and the white race.

Similarly, fears of ZOG that sought to harm the white race fueled the League's anti-Semitic vitriol. They blamed the "Jewish media" for pitting white men and women against each other, which "destroy[ed] [their] cause."[18] Their complaints against Jewish women went further than simply claiming that they manipulate white men and women against each other. League members also held that they possessed inherently unattractive qualities that hampered the organizing that white women needed to engage in. League members produced propaganda that warned recruits: "No longer will all the gossiping like a bunch of jewish [sic] old maids will be

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[15] Wolfing, *What is the Aryan Women's League*.
[16] Ibid.
[17] Himmelspach, "Aryan Women's League is Aided."
[18] "Attention White Women!" 1989, 76.26/Hall Hoag 287, John Hay Library, Brown University, Providence, RI.

tolerated!" from members.[19] White women had to break with stereotypically feminine activities like "gossiping," which they demeaned as a "Jewish" trait, in order to effectively organize for the white power community. In order to effectively promote the AWL, white women had to stick together in their sisterhood. In doing so, they demeaned liberal feminists and Jewish people, rejecting them as sources of ideas that would divide the sisterhood and divorce women from the men of the WPM.

Authors in the group newsletter believed that one part of white sisterhood meant supporting their decisions to become mothers and raise white children in a ZOG-free environment. League members felt that this aspect of reproductive labor would help their fight against minority groups. Even though white supremacists held that a woman's "mothering instinct" was unassailable, they also feared the end of the white race due to the overpopulation of ethnic minorities or increased abortions among white women.[20] One contributing author to *White Sisters*, Dennis Mahon, lamented that the white race was "on the disgusting road to extinction" and that they could "only blame [themselves] collectively" for the "suicidal" actions of not having enough children.[21] He claimed that the solution was to "strive to have three or four children" per Aryan couple to combat decreased white birthrates, which aligned with the reproductive labor championed by the League.[22] Agreeing with Mahon's premise, women of the League celebrated children as the reason that they fought together for supremacy over other races and religions. Proudly, they claimed to be "THE BEARERS OF THE FUTURE WHITE RACE! and scattered images of children and parents, especially mothers, throughout *White Sisters*.[23]

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[19] Ibid.
[20] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 5, 13.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Ibid.
[23] Attention White Women!

One picture on the cover of the newsletter showed a happy parent holding a smiling young child. Captioned "what our fight is all about," the League reiterated how they viewed white children as both the reason for struggling to provide a good future and the solution to the problems the white race faced.[24]

As these comments suggest, League members believed that sisterhood meant bearing white children, which consequently implied not taking contraceptives or ending white pregnancies. While several white power organizations, including WAR, openly supported "birth control and abortion for non-Whites living in North America," the same could not be said for their attitude towards white women's decision to terminate pregnancies.[25] Referring to the choice as a "suicidal way of thinking," WAR warned that those who "voluntarily destroyed millions of healthy, White babies" would someday receive "future Aryan justice."[26] Those who failed to commit to having children hampered the WPM in their battle for dominance. Although no articles in *White Sisters* by women spoke about abortion, Mahon reframed the focus of the issue from one about winning physical battles to winning a "battle of the groin."[27] He placed in no uncertain terms the importance of white women and mothers to the WPM as opposed to outright violence. This prospect, secretly harboring these views while having more children and raising them with racist viewpoints, is arguably scarier and poses a larger threat than KKK rally-goers who can be identified and in some cases immediately arrested. Mahon called for people to behave "normally" and wait, to grow in numbers naturally, addressing a major weakness to the fringe WPM.

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[24] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 2, ii.
[25] *WAR,* October 1996, 10, RH WL G2157 Folder 1, WAR Newsletters, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS. For more on right wing support for sterilization and limiting the pregnancies of women of color, see Self, *All in the Family*, 149-153.
[26] *WAR*, October 1996, 10, RH WL G2157 Folder 1, WAR Newsletters, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.
[27] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 5, 13.

League members similarly considered monogamy and heterosexual partnerships essential to sisterhood. AWL literature did not specifically suggest that women and men had to be married in order to work for the goals of the WPM. However, they encouraged monogamous and loyal partnerships between men and women as a means to foster having children and acting in a "supporting" role that created community beyond paramilitary barracks. The organization stood for "promoting family cohesiveness and solid family foundations," built on couples having children and "educating them properly and doing whatever is in our power to improve situations for them to insure [sic] that they are brought up loved and protected."[28] To accomplish this goal, the AWL "provide[d] information on child rearing, homecare … first aid, self defense, home-gardening, and overall an exchange of knowledge and ideas" designed to facilitate happy families made up of an Aryan man, and Aryan woman, and their children.[29] In order to encourage stable families, the League also promoted fidelity to partners as a part of sisterhood. Jill Rineman argued that women needed to "stand by our men and never betray or fall away."[30] She praised Shirley Silva, whose husband had been imprisoned for seven years at the time of publication, as a "true Aryan woman" for her loyalty.[31] They emphasized emotional support and monogamy to build ties to other movement members.

White sisters also conducted reproductive labor beyond child rearing, providing emotional support that male members often sought out. When reviewing the testimonies of former radical racists, one key theme emerges: the desire for a community. Like Olsen, some ex-members of the WPM of the 1980s and 1990s cited the search for camaraderie as key in their decisions to join the racist groups in the first place. Tony McAleer, formally of WAR, described

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[28] Wolfing, *What is the Aryan Women's League.*
[29] Ibid.
[30] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 2, 9.
[31] Ibid.

his reasons for both joining and leaving the group in his memoir *The Cure for Hate*. To McAleer, the relationships with other members helped convince him to join and remain in the movement long after he grew tired of the work itself. When he was young, he caught his father cheating on his mother with another woman. Although they remained married, McAleer ruminated on how this incident caused him to lose faith in the community figures in his life.[32] As he acted out more, a girl named "Kiva" introduced him to punk music and the broader skinhead movement, showing him a culture that at its worst embraced violence and extreme hatred.[33] After a lonely childhood, he appreciated that both male and female racist skinheads showed up to back him whatever fight he found himself in.[34]

In fact, McAleer cites his disenchantment with relationships within WAR as part of his reason to leave the group. His tumultuous relationship with his white power ex-girlfriend left him feeling alienated, and he rationalized leaving WAR for his children not because their ideology professed evil ideas, but instead because he was "disillusioned" with the movement members and leaders whose community he had cherished for years.[35] He did not find it worthwhile to raise his children in a community so beholden to violence while lacking the brotherhood that he initially cherished. Based on his testimonial, it is clear that the companionship that the WPM provided should not be underestimated. The reproductive labor that provided social connections became the driving force behind the AWL. Maintaining idealized relationships with women has always been a key component of white power ideology; it is no surprise that the AWL decided to focus their attention on the issue. From their own

[32] Tony McAleer, *The Cure for Hate: A Former White Supremacist's Journey From Violent Extremism to Radical Compassion*, (Vancouver, British Columbia: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2019), 27,
[33] Ibid., 45.
[34] Ibid., 56.
[35] Ibid., 138.

children and family to movement members imprisoned for their crimes, much of the work that the AWL completed focused on providing a community fundamental to sustained commitment to the WPM.

The ideal Aryan woman championed by the white sisterhood therefore dedicated her life to the white power community and the people within it. The AWL took care to recognize examples of exceptional Aryan women who followed these guidelines in *White Sisters*. For instance, the League celebrated Dorothy Miles as one of the women who had "devoted their lives to the cause" of white supremacy and the greater white supremacist community.[36] Lynn Metzger had been so impressed with Dorothy's answers that she published the unedited interview in lieu of writing an article. She wrote in awe that she hoped to achieve what Dorothy had, "that is … being a true Aryan woman."[37] Miles did not speak about participating in rallies, in robberies, or in attacks on enemies of the white race. She did talk, however, about how she dedicated her life to the reproductive labor necessary to maintain a racist community.

Miles grew up in one such community in New York. Her father was the Exalted Cyclops of the Nassau County Ku Klux Klan, and she had known her future husband Robert since she was four years old. Together, the couple had one daughter.[38] Throughout the article, Miles celebrated her monogamous partnership with her husband. Holding that "each sex has values different to each other" that are "not in conflict but they strengthen the other mutually to each other," Miles reiterated the AWL's ideas about women having a specific yet supporting role in the WPM.[39] She demonstrated, again, their values when her husband went to prison in 1973. After the federal government imprisoned him for bombing ten school buses used to integrate

[36] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 5, 7.
[37] Ibid., 8.
[38] Ibid., 8.
[39] Ibid., 8.

Michigan schools, she visited him five times a year and wrote often during his six-year sentence, remaining faithful to him even when behind bars.[40] While such times were "hard times in memory," the AWL celebrated her continued emotional support to her husband.[41]

Miles also performed reproductive labor for a white supremacist dualist church run by her husband Robert in Michigan. This group, called the Mountain, facilitated paramilitary training and "cell-driven revolutionary violence" on behalf of the WPM. Dorothy handled communications and provided education to members. She "operate[d] the computer programs and coordinate[d] its mailing" for this organization. She also claimed to teach families involved with the Mountain as well.[42] Although Miles claimed to have taught white children, it is not clear whether she did so with regard to schoolwork or in a broader sense. Connecting movement members to each other through the operation of communications, she helped transform the movement into a community. By teaching families, she engaged in reproductive labor designed to educate and foster connections based on shared, taught values. Other women of the AWL promoted such reproductive labor and community-building that Miles claimed she dedicated her life to, hoping to keep alive her call for "family, faith, believe [sic] and love of each other within our own race!"[43]

Reproductive Labor Centered on Children

Like Miles, members of the League translated the ideology of white sisterhood into lived reality by sponsoring programs, selling products, and promoting support for other members of the WPM. Most of this activity, as well as the majority of the AWL's literature, goals, and

[40] Ibid., 8-9.
[41] Ibid., 8.
[42] Ibid., 8.
[43] Ibid., 9.

sponsored events, centered on the care and keeping of white children – the most obvious examples of their reproductive labor. Sisters focused on making these spaces "pure," free from the influence of ZOG or other subversive sources they saw as detrimental to their goals of racial domination. In focusing first on children, the League attempted to ensure that the generation of babies they saw as necessary to subvert white extinction would grow up in comfortable, like-minded, and racist homes.

The AWL saw bearing and raising white children in a healthy, safe, ideologically pure atmosphere as one of the keys to success for the WPM. Accordingly, the group's leaders advertised services to their readers that stressed protecting white children from dangerous influences of the mainstream world. The League published the "Aryan Women's League Crafts, Products and Informational Services" bulletin in *White Sisters* and sent it to interested parties who contacted AWL. The League created the bulletin because it believed its members were "very busy in the formation and production of various items that we hope you will find useful to your Aryan family."[44] They provided these services because "the Jews have long controlled the market" and that it was high time they "supported [their] own."[45] Working together as white sisters to supply a valuable service to Aryan families, these products represented one of the main ways that the League engaged with the white power community to protect white kids and promote their birth.

Given this fact, many of the products that the AWL sold centered around childcare. The group urged parents to buy the products or risk their children's education and wellbeing. One such item, simply titled "Aryan Coloring Book," sold for $5.00 with the description "don't let your child be forced to color what all the Jews have prepared for him! Let your child learn, while

[44] Ibid., 24.
[45] Ibid., 24.

coloring, of their Aryan history!"[46] Here, the AWL equated mainstream toys with ideas that they did not support. Subversion of white power ideology allegedly could come from anywhere outside of the trusted community, and responsible Aryan parents, primarily mothers, had to take responsibility to stand vigilant against this. In this way, members of the "white sisterhood' tried to protect their community from the influences of the ever-present ZOG by creating their own educational resources and restricted the media that their families consumed.

The AWL also provided clothing free of charge in an attempt to ease the burden on families routinely expected to have over three children. For example, the AWL ran a "Baby Clothes Drive" for needy white families. Another instance of "Aryans supporting Aryans," the League published advertisements in *White Sisters* urging readers to donate baby items to their P.O. box.[47] They provided clothes free of charge to white separatists who wrote to the AWL, and these garments could be tailored to the infant's "sex, age … measurements, and weather conditions of the area" that the family lived in.[48] Interested parties could even receive toys, maternity clothes, and other sources of "support" or "information" at no cost to them.[49] Within the community the AWL fostered, parents could find charity for their families without resorting to government programs or other outside sources of aid. By ensuring that children received proper care, the League tried to provide solutions to common excuses some couples might have employed to avoid becoming parents, a position anathema to the goals of the WPM.

League members not only provided services and products that aided newborn children to people; they also shared information, tips, and warnings with supporters on how best to raise healthy Aryan families. In some articles published in *White Sisters*, League members attempted

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[46] Ibid., 24.
[47] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 2, 21.
[48] Aryan Women's League, "Ephemeral Materials," Bonsall, California: Aryan Women's League, c. 1990.
[49] Ibid.

to provide helpful advice for mothers to increase their family's health, self-sufficiency, and following of white power ideology. In other cases, writers cautioned parents about the types of food their family consumed. One AWL supporter, for example, recommended different kinds of juices to help supplement familial nutrition. Another warned of the risk that honey and karo syrup posed to infants under 12 months of age.[50]

Other articles warned parents to watch where they bought their food, urging self-sufficiency and reliance on other movement members to fight against pervasive threats from Jewish-controlled businesses. In one issue, an AWL supporter named "Kristina" provided a list of companies that carried Kosher products, urging readers to send her money in return for an information packet and to write to the companies themselves in protest of these products.[51] Another article, simply entitled "Boycott Lucky's!," recounted that another League member had been "attacked by employees and gang members who just happened to have guns" in a California Lucky's Supermarket. In response, the article urged all sympathetic parties to boycott the store. Mixing concern for familial health, sufficiency within the community, and white power ideology, these articles on reproductive labor helped explain the role white women needed to take in order to provide community beyond the barracks.

Literature produced by the AWL suggests that these women not only provided this advice to others but that they followed it as well. In the second issue of *White Sisters*, AWL executive director Monique Wolfing apologized for the lateness of the newsletter by claiming that many of the women involved in its publication had become new mothers.[52] Leaders of the AWL looked to each other and other women when putting together the article, valuing the experience and

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[50] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 5, 20 and *White Sisters*, Issue No. 2, 10.
[51] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 5, 19.
[52] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 2, ii.

expertise they learned from within the white power community.[53] The League gave this advice to address concerns that women within and outside of the movement put forth as reasons for delaying or not having children. The clothing drives for struggling families, continuous avenues to reach out for help and advice, and the flurry of articles driving home the idea that having several children naturally fulfilled every woman's "mothering instinct."

Beyond advising white families, the League tried to help members meet a future spouse. Reaching out to their readers in their second issue of *White Sisters*, they asked for volunteers to provide their names, a short description of themselves, and a P.O. Box to publish in later issues of the newsletter for the express purpose of finding "that special someone" to start a large white family with.[54] This "Aryan Singles/Pen Pals" column attracted men and women who sought partners.[55] In case readers misunderstood the purpose of the service, the AWL included a graphic of a stork and a "fun fact" about the birth of the first white child in America.[56] People needed to have a great degree of trust in order to utilize this service – after all, the advertisers could easily lie about their interests, age, or appearance, and the AWL warned readers that they would not be held responsible for any negative experiences.[57] However, several people wrote to the column, with requests ranging from anyone "who shares the same beliefs" to a "mate."[58] This service allowed racist men and women to foster interpersonal relationships within the WPM, strengthening the community. League members hoped the couples would get married and have children, once again assisting in the reproductive labor required to create and support a community.

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[53] Ibid., ii.
[54] Ibid., 21.
[55] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 5, 10.
[56] Ibid., 10.
[57] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 2, 21.
[58] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 5, 10.

Reproductive Labor for Community Building Beyond Children

Living their ideology in their day-to-day lives involved more than just parenting. It also meant supporting members who worked to overthrow the US government and fight for an independent Aryan state. Their actions connected people beyond the purposes of having children and tied the women more explicitly to the "masculine" world of movement activity as members of "support groups." By participating as nurses and aiding prisoners, League members expanded the spheres that women presided in. League members, while still in subordinate positions, worked as part of the paramilitary side of the WPM without abandoning their prominence in the domestic sphere. The reproductive labor that the AWL performed here provided tangible evidence of the white power community for the men of the group, who were comforted by white women's presence and reassured that their sacrifices had not been in vain. Members of the League followed through on one of their central goals, strengthening interpersonal connections, when they aided movement men.

Members of the AWL engaged in reproductive labor to care for those injured as they engaged in paramilitary operations on behalf of the WPM. This created a sense that these men did not fight for white power in a vacuum; women's aid provided tangible evidence of the community on behalf of which they fought. The AWL ran a program entitled "Operation White Nurse," where they urged "responsible individuals" to "start [their] studies to help with the Life Support Unit of [their] warriors."[59] This program, in which League members taught other women in how to care for wounded Aryan "warriors," claimed to let women "put [their] dedication toward White Survival into action."[60] In their program title, League members drew on traditional

[59] Ibid., 21.
[60] Ibid., 21.

women's roles of caring for the sick and infirm. Beyond having children, these women worked to ensure that movement members remained relatively healthy and cared for even as they engaged in paramilitary operations and violent action on behalf of the white race.

The AWL's work with prisoners, however, most clearly illustrated the reproductive labor and community building that was essential to their mission of supporting movement members. These criminals, dubbed "Prisoners of War / POWs" or "Political Prisoners" by the AWL, received various means of support even when behind bars. Sometimes League members themselves worked directly with imprisoned extremists. Several writers in *White Sisters* encouraged interested parties to purchase a subscription to the newsletter.[61] Editors made clear exceptions for incarcerated warriors. People imprisoned for supporting the WPM could instead receive a subscription to *White Sisters* and other material in exchange for stamps, drawings, and articles that editors often included in *White Sisters*.[62] Materials solicited from these "POWs" even comprised a full chapter in the "Aryan Coloring Book" that the AWL sold to its readers. Some correspondence between imprisoned white supremacists and their supporters indicated that the dearth of movement literature in prison negatively affected POWs morale and that they appreciated newsletters in the mail.[63] Providing prisoners a way to contribute to white power publications and to receive literature in turn, the AWL kept them active in the white power community.

The League also urged sympathetic readers to provide emotional and monetary support to the "POWs," an essential kind of reproductive labor necessary for their mental health. In several editions of *White Sisters*, white women published the names, prisoner numbers, and contact

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[61] Ibid., ii.
[62] Ibid., ii.
[63] Letter from Allen Kaiser to James Mason, 7/10/1991, RH WL MS 41 Box 6, Folder 2, James N. Mason Papers; Kaiser, Allen 1991; Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

information of several male inmates across the country.[64] At the top of these pages read "the Aryan Women's League supports our POW's and comrades in the fight. Show them your support also!"[65] The AWL also boosted financial campaigns for the POWs, such as through their advertisement of "The Support Committee" that they urged their readers to send donations to.[66] In each of these editions, the AWL expressed support for these men, but also urged more people to contact them. Thus, the AWL performed a necessary emotional service to aid prisoners when sequestered from their loved ones, homes, and communities.

A key example that illustrates the importance of their work can be seen in the letter that POW and Order member Randy Evans sent to thank the League. As a sort of holiday care package, the AWL sent a Certificate of Appreciation and a photograph of AWL women to "each and every one" of the POWs to show their continued support throughout the holiday season.[67] They then published the letter that Evans wrote in thanks for the gift. Evans claimed that the gift "choked [him] up," and that it was "amazing how a thing like what you did for me can make a feller feel."[68] Clearly, the sisters of the League provided essential emotional support to this man and others while in prison. Evans also applauded their character as Aryan women. "You are good sisters," he praised in his letter. He commended them for keeping him in the white power community even while in prison and providing necessary emotional support. This reproductive labor helped ease his stress and loneliness. Evans further noted that "knowing our people are represented by fine ladies like you makes it easy" to endure his prison sentence.[69]

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[64] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 5, 15.
[65] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 2, 2.
[66] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 5, 18.
[67] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 2, 17.
[68] Ibid., 17.
[69] Ibid., 17.

Breaks with Reproductive Labor

While the AWL pushed supporters to build white power communities through reproductive labor, some women in the hate movement did not always follow their ideology. Historians should not focus on using contradictions between the AWL's ideology and how women broke with it to prove that the League suffered from false consciousness.[70] Women of the League did not stop their advertisement of white sisterhood because some women did not follow their ideology. Instead, historians need to move past the instinct to stop at this claim and look to see how, with the ideology they created, these women built and sustained the communities of the WPM. The breaks with white sisterhood instead underscored why the AWL felt the need to promote white sisterhood to alleviate these breaks. Some individual women, for example, expressed concerns about the responsibilities and dangers of pregnancy. These concerns included financial challenges, health risks, being pigeonholed by the movement into motherhood, and simply not wanting children. Some women openly spoke about their willingness to have children, but privately held other opinions. Others changed their minds as time passed. The League asked members to dedicate a significant portion of their lives to work that was simultaneously undervalued and subordinated women to movement men. Not all women, including committed white supremacists, would find this task desirable.

Sociologist Kathleen Blee, for example, uncovered a wide range of attitudes towards the care and raising of children among women in the WPM in the 1990s. While some female white supremacists that she interviewed spoke eagerly about the prospects of motherhood and large families, others expressed more trepidation. One potential recruit told Blee that the movement's focus on raising white children "made her and her girlfriends reluctant" to join it.[71] Even

[70] Nickerson, *Mothers of Conservatism*, 169.
[71] Blee, *Inside Organized Racism*, 126.

committed members did not always exude enthusiasm about having more than one or two children. The issue of cost came up as both a reason for delaying pregnancies and limiting them. Some, like Corinna Olsen, confided that they had taken medical steps to ensure that they would not become pregnant again.[72]

In a similar vein, not all women involved in the larger WPM stuck to the party line on the issue of abortion. While some racist women expressed disgust for the medical practice, others in the WPM privately shared a wide range of opinions. Some movement supporters interviewed by Blee claimed that the decision to have an abortion should be a "private matter," indicating a sympathy for arguments suggesting that a woman and her doctor should make the decision.[73] Another woman even admitted that she had an abortion, potentially opening her up to allegations of "betraying" her race.[74] Even as the AWL engaged in services to ease the financial and emotional burden, it sometimes was not enough to convince every racist woman to have children.

Furthermore, not all women affiliated with the WPM remained faithful to their partners, betraying the idea of the "ideal Aryan woman" remaining loyal to their partners. For instance, Eva Herler received love letters from white supremacist Richard Kemp while he was imprisoned in the late spring of 1994. Based on multiple intimate letters, it seemed that Kemp fully accepted the AWL-sponsored ideas of family and monogamous partnerships between white men and white women. Several times, he wrote to her and asked to hear about her love for him.[75] He wanted "to be [her] pal, [her] confidante, [her] teammate," aligning with the ideal couple

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[72] Ibid., 126.
[73] Ibid., 100.
[74] Ibid., 100.
[75] Letter from Richard Kemp to Eva Herler, 5/05/1994, RH WL MS 41 Box 10, Folder 8, James N. Mason Papers; Kemp, Richard; Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

dynamic that Dorothy and Robert Miles seemed to exemplify.[76] He often thought about marrying Herler and starting a family with her, describing a "fairy tale" life with "a beautiful wife … a successful husband … nice house" and "beautiful, well-behaved kids" and gave her instructions to learn all she could about moving to Sheridan, Oregon for this purpose.[77] He also sent her a photograph of him shirtless during his correspondence, perhaps expecting her to appreciate an intimate photograph as a symbol of their partnership in spite of the separation.[78] His repeated overtures for love and affection underscored the importance of the emotional support women could provide to relieve men from the stresses of prison life.

Herler, however, did not return his affections or perform the reproductive labor that the League promoted. While living with fellow white supremacist James Mason, Herler cheated on Kemp twice: once with Mason himself, and for a prolonged time with an unnamed Mexican man. She stopped writing to Kemp and changed her number to make it harder for him to contact her.[79] In fact, the letters revealing her infidelity to Kemp came not from Herler, but from Mason. In an update to Kemp, Mason wrote that Herler had "renounced the movement" and planned to stay with the Mexican man. [80] Far from exemplifying an "ideal woman," Herler not only stopped providing emotional support to Kemp while in prison, but she also committed the ultimate sin for a white woman by engaging in sexual relations with a person of color. Her history shows that while many women supported the goals of the AWL, the lived experiences of others in the movement remained far more complicated. In speaking out against the actions of women like Herler, the League did not accept that their ideology might be flawed and stop advancing it.

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[76] Ibid.
[77] Ibid.
[78] Ibid.
[79] Ibid.
[80] Ibid.

Instead, it demonstrated the need for the organization to keep promoting the ideals of reproductive labor, continuing to affect the lives of Americans around them.

Conclusion

As historian Laura Briggs points out, the often overlooked labor of women has sustained a variety of social movements.[81] League members engaged in all kinds of reproductive labor to sustain racist activism in the 1980s and 1990s. To encourage women to have more children, they created newsletters, products, and services designed to ease the financial and emotional burden of having a child. To encourage monogamous partnerships between movement men and women, the AWL provided a dating service in their newsletter. To keep imprisoned movement members engaged with the white power community and emotionally supported through their time in prison, women wrote letters to them and encouraged their participation in creating movement literature and products. As they did work largely overlooked not just here, but throughout women's history, these women helped to sustain the WPM.

Highlighting this largely invisible work of women in these communities shows historians how white women worked within the confines of gender roles supported by white supremacist groups to make contributions key to their staying power. The promise of community within the groups helped to sustain members through the illegal activities they partook in. The AWL focused the brunt of their work on avenues that supported people already in the movement, helping to cement continued membership in the radical group. The white women of the League helped to structure a society, however small, that those engaging in violence and serving prison sentences could point to as rationale for why they fought.

[81] Briggs, *All Politics is Reproductive Politics*, 2.

Chapter Three

Rape This!: Aryan Women Warriors and Their Participation in White Power Violence

In 1990, the AWL published an "Aryan Coloring Book" for the express purpose of entertaining and teaching children free of ZOG's influence. This document contains some of the most explicitly racist drawings of Jewish people and African Americans published by the League. Women identified these groups as threats to the white race, depicting them as criminals that could only be stopped with violence.[1] At first glance, this document might seem to be a pure example of the reproductive labor that the women championed. After all, League members used the coloring book to teach children about "their Aryan history" without the influences of ZOG.[2] However, the drawings suggested to the children who read the coloring book that the only way to "save [their] Aryan race" was by fighting back against nonwhite aggressors. The coloring book does not depict women as mothers or caretakers, despite an entire section dedicated to "our future" and white children.[3] Women instead appear in the document as Viking warriors and medieval farmers, working alongside men to fight on behalf of the white race. One drawing, entitled an "Aryan Women [sic] Warrior," depicts a female Viking with a horned helmet, with hate symbols emblazoned on her clothing.[4] At the bottom, in Germanic script, are the initials "A.W.L." This coloring book shows that in addition to "white sisterhood," the League promoted a second role for its members: Aryan Woman Warriors.

The Aryan Coloring Book explores the "warrior" role for women, a position that moved them out of the domestic sphere and onto the battlefield of the white power revolution. During

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[1] Aryan Coloring Book, 39-42.
[2] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 5, 24
[3] Aryan Coloring Book, 23.
[4] Ibid., 12.

the 1980s and 1990s, hate watch organizations that studied the AWL and other white supremacist women noticed an upward trend of women playing key roles in patrolling neighborhoods, vandalism, assaults, and even murders that targeted nonwhite people. In their attempts to expand the ways women participated in the WPM, *Klanwatch* suggested that these women "face[d] a formidable predicament, similar to the one that sparked the women's movement 20 years ago: they [struggled] to enlarge the niche occupied by their older counterparts whose contribution to the white supremacy movement still consists almost entirely of keeping house, raising children and keeping their husband's Klan robes patched and pressed."[5] Members of the League had previously embraced supporting other groups while in the domestic sphere, which aligned to some degree with conservative ideas about a woman's "place" in the WPM. In order to validate taking part in the movement as warriors, women needed a specific reason for them to engage in violent activity.

White women, consequently, justified taking on this role in the movement by defining nonwhite people as threats to themselves, their families, and the wellbeing of the larger white power community. These activists drew upon longstanding American racist beliefs about the dangers of Black rapists and criminality to justify their violence. According to historian Robert Self, the "Black rapist mythology" had been "woven into the fabric of American racial narratives," rationalizing "the terror of white rule" by claiming to defend white womanhood.[6] Throughout League literature, members included drawings and accounts of white women taking up arms against nonwhite attackers. In these publications, women violently confronted threats to their homes and their sexual purity. In addition to a fear of nonwhite rapists, the AWL believed that ZOG encouraged the decline of the white race by promoting equal rights for women, African

[5] "Cookbooks and Combat Boots," 7.
[6] Self, *All in the Family*, 212.

Americans, and other ethnic minorities. This Jewish-led conspiracy allegedly threatened white families by pitting white men and white women against each other, leading to intraracial conflict and the decline of white births. While the broader WPM considered these concerns essential, the AWL specifically argued that women should pick up arms and defend themselves as opposed to relying on men for protection.

Yet despite their best efforts, white women were not equal in that "presumptively male world."[7] Men in the WPM often doubted or belittled women as active leaders or participants in any role beyond the domestic sphere. In practice, female activists often worked alongside men to further violent and criminal agendas on behalf of the WPM. Historian Kathleen Belew holds that "women's activism" primarily functioned "to support the war on the stage waged through men's violence."[8] Examples of aid included "disguising male activists and driving getaway cars, destroying documents" and "transporting people and weapons."[9] Rather than rob a bank themselves, AWL affiliates aided the movement men in their planning and execution of these crimes. Women of the League placed a great deal of importance on being a "support group" for other racist organizations. As women warriors, this work extended beyond the home front and on to the battlefield. Whether supplying the weapons, hiding the evidence, or instigating the fight itself, women primarily facilitated the violence of men. Even though they acted in supporting roles, these positions gave white women the opportunity to make more "substantive contributions" to the violence the WPM was known for.[10]

While white women expected threats to their safety to come from nonwhite men, in actuality, the men they worked with posed a greater threat. League members emphasized the

[7] Belew, *Bring the War Home*, 6.
[8] Ibid., 158.
[9] Ibid., 168.
[10] Ibid., 168.

importance of white men and women working together as key to the success of the WPM. However, merely claiming the necessity of male and female partnerships did not protect them from verbal or physical abuse. Men sometimes threatened or beat female movement members for disloyalty to them or the WPM. The abuse at the hands of men that they claimed to support represented a shortcoming to the AWL's goals. Despite their attempts to work with men, women continued to struggle against the maltreatment they suffered at their hands. Again, historians should not simply point to this as an example of the false consciousness of women. They inflicted violence on nonwhite people and experienced it themselves at the hands of their male comrades. Historians should remember, therefore, that these "Aryan women warriors" contributed to a movement that inflicted psychological terror and physical harm on communities of color, even as they dealt with misogyny within their own movement.

Ideology of Aryan Women Warriors

The AWL juggled two narratives about the roles of white women: one as "white sisters" supporting their own communities and one as "Aryan women warriors" defending their communities from nonwhite people. Sometimes these terms contradicted one another, and at other times they reinforced one another. During the 1980s and 1990s, movement men widely painted women as passive homemakers and depicted them as victims of sexual violence from nonwhite assailants. As "white sisters," the AWL acted as a support group primarily in the domestic sphere of the movement. However, the group also advocated for women working as "Aryan woman warriors" on the battlefield to defend themselves against the alleged threats of minority groups. They justified their roles as sisters and warriors because of the unique threat that nonwhite men posed to them as women. The ways that they performed their dual identities

sometimes caused them to blend together, even with their seemingly different definitions. Parsing the different requirements of each role mandated careful and sometimes contradictory language to express the variety of ways that women could use their gender to justify different avenues of participation.

In spite of their extensive writings disparaging ethnic and religious minorities, the AWL tried to define themselves as supporters of racist white people, rather than violent aggressors. They projected themselves as white women who aided other white people, not aggressors who hurt others. Group members made violence in this context seem anathema to the goals of women-centric groups like the AWL. According to a document explaining the purpose of the organization, "The Aryan Women's League is about alot [sic] of positive things, but one thing [they] are not about is hatred… . It is high time that [they] concentrated on mending [their] own situations and helping those of [their] brothers and sisters."[11] Here, the AWL highlighted its identity as a white sisterhood, which focused on providing services to white people in need.

By elevating this stance in their mission statement, League women obscured another of their goals: fighting the ethnic minorities they believed posed a sexual threat to them. Movement literature relied on a longstanding tradition of racializing rape. For much of American history, most white people believed that Black men represented a sexual threat to white women. Black men accused of rape or whistling inappropriately at a white woman often faced retribution from lynch mobs. According to the podcast Sexing History, by representing Black men as sexual threats to white women, white people have "justified their criminalization, incarceration, and murder" throughout US history.[12] Women's claims of rape or sexual misconduct often went ignored unless a white woman made an accusation against a Black man.

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[11] Wolfing, "What is the Aryan Women's League."
[12] Gillian Frank and Lauren Gutterman, "Against Our Will," *Sexing History*, November 15, 2019, 29:45.

Even as activists in the broader women's movement unmasked the pervasive yet unaddressed problem of rape in the late twentieth century, some liberal white women did not acknowledge the harm that painting Black men as rapists posed. Susan Brownmiller, for example, challenged the idea that "women who accused men of rape were lying" about their experiences in her 1975 book *Against Our Will*. However, she dismissed the idea that Black men were unfairly painted as threats to white women as a notion held by "communists."[13] Further, she editorialized in the 1970s that "in increasing numbers … white women are raped by Black men as part and parcel of the hostility between the races today."[14] The widespread acceptance even by white liberals of this "Black rapist mythology" unfairly demonized Black men in American society as an ongoing threat rooted in racial hostility.[15]

While League members disliked feminists like Brownmiller, they shared her concerns about the sexual threat that Black men allegedly posed to white women. Movement members often included depictions of Black men as rapists in their publications. When men edited the publications, according to scholar Jessie Daniels white women were "rarely, if ever, represented as leaders, or even ideal members of the movement."[16] Instead, "their reproductive abilities and sexual attractiveness" remained the primary focus.[17] In the 1980s and 1990s, propaganda divided women who had sex with nonwhite people into two categories. First, writers portrayed white women as consensual participants in mixed-race relationships, damning them as traitors to the race.[18] Second, propagandists depicted them as passive victims of abuse at the hands of men of

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[13] Ibid., 11:01.
[14] Ibid., 31:02.
[15] Self, *All in the Family*, 212.
[16] Daniels, *White Lies* 57.
[17] Ibid., 57.
[18] *WAR,* February 2004, 12, RH WL G2157 Folder 2, WAR Newsletters, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

color, in need of white men to step in and rescue them.[19] Men portrayed women either without agency or as saboteurs of the movement instead of equal partners worthy of trust and respect.

Therefore, the AWL promoted the role of "Aryan Women Warriors" among its members to combat the perceived sexual threats of nonwhite aggressors. In doing so, they championed respectable positions within the WPM for racist white women as equal partners willing to fight back against the threats to their sexual purity and "race-mixing."[20] Their most prominent explanation of what it meant to fight for the white race came in a recurring article in *White Sisters* entitled "Aryan Women Warriors." According to Lynn Metzger, the series promoted a select few "who had dedicated their lives to the cause" throughout the "struggle for Aryan unity and survival."[21]

The best example of this lay with Kathy Ainsworth, a martyr celebrated by the AWL for her death after a failed bombing and assassination of Meyer Davidson, a prominent Jewish community leader in 1968 in Meridian, Mississippi. The allegedly pregnant Klanswoman, armed with a .25 caliber pistol, was shot in the back of the head by federal agents and died almost instantly.[22] In a description of her life and death later published in *White Sisters*, League leaders claimed that although it was a "mystery" as to "whether she had been engaged in a bombing when she had been shot," they nevertheless praised her as "a fine soldier in the fight for the Aryan Race."[23] Despite their equivocations, they nevertheless deemed her a warrior in her own right who deserved praise for her actions, and they held her up as a model for other women dedicated to the cause of white supremacy. Members of the AWL admonished their followers to

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[19] *WAR,* March 1996, 6, RH WL G2157 Folder 1, WAR Newsletters, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.
[20] Ibid.
[21] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 5, 7.
[22] Jack Nelson, "Terror in the Night: The Klan's Campaign Against the Jews," *The Atlanta Journal and Constitution*, January 24, 1993.
[23] Martin Durham, *White Rage: The Extreme Right and American Politics* (New York: Routledge, 2007), 95.

remember warriors like Ainsworth who had "died for your future," recognizing the sacrifice she had made on behalf of the white race and allowing them to carry on the fight for white power as women.[24] These women defined Ainsworth as an "Aryan woman warrior," one of the first in an increasingly long line of tough women to join the hate movement.

Members of the League celebrated "Aryan Women Warriors" with imagery that depicted them protecting their homes and themselves from nonwhite attackers. One sketch in *White Sisters* depicted a white settler woman killing several Native Americans, noting with pride that "Mrs. John Merrill killed four redskins as they came through the smashed door, then finished off two more who tried to come down the chimney."[25] Mrs. Merrill, standing tall and wielding an axe, positioned herself between the badly wounded, bleeding Native Americans and an unnamed white male laying prone on the floor. Without help from the white man in the picture, this woman violently fended off non-white persons that represented an immediate threat to her home and safety.

While the previous example established a history of women warriors taking up arms to defend themselves and their homes, the League also grounded some depictions of violent white women fighting in the style of the present WPM. One AWL flyer depicted a modern Aryan woman warrior fighting back against perceived sexual threats to her and her white womanhood. The set up to this drawing drew on familiar beats from both American history and within white power publications: a Black man presented an immediate sexual threat to a white woman.

However, a drawing entitled "Rape This!" subverted depictions of white women as passive victims in need of rescue or active traitors to the race. Instead, it established them as capable fighters for the WPM in their own right. Here, the white woman roundhouse kicks the

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[24] *White Sisters* Issue no. 2, 3.
[25] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 5, 9.

Black man, pushing him back forcefully and causing him to drop a baseball bat intended as a weapon. She also wields a bloody, dripping knife in one hand, the complement to a bloody stab wound on the man's right side.[26] Dressed in combat boots and camo pants, this drawing of a woman even took on the paramilitary garb associated with the men of the WPM. Linking women to the imagery and violent actions of the broader WPM, League members expanded the acceptable ways that women could comport themselves by protecting themselves from the presumed threats that people of color posed.

Although these women argued that they only used violence in self-defense, they reinforced racist ideas about threats to white women. AWL literature invoked calls for Aryan women warriors to join white men as equal warriors in their fight against people of color. When publishing these ideas, League propaganda expanded the jobs white women performed, supplementing roles previous scholars identified in the ideology of the WPM.[27] In one poem contributed to *White Sisters* by prisoner Chris Reinke, for example, he wrote that white women in the hate movement may have to work directly with their male partners, "not just to love him, but to join in his fight / standing side by side or back to back / shooting and stabbing at the enemies [sic] attack."[28] By rejecting the idea that white women only love movement men, Reinke refuted the idea that white women *only* existed in an emotionally supportive capacity within the movement. While the AWL held such reproductive labor as a central pillar of its ideology, it was not the only idea that guided the women of the AWL. Here, Reinke portrayed white women and white men as equals, engaged in the same activities and fighting back against nonwhite threats to the white race. At least in part, League members called for their

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[26] Rape This! 1989, 76.26/Hall Hoag 287, John Hay Library, Brown University, Providence, RI.
[27] Belew, *Bring the War Home*, 167; Daniels, *White Lies*, 56.
[28] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 2, 1.

"partnership" to take on a violent turn as a necessity in a battle they perceived to be for the survival of the white race.

The imagery employed by the AWL also depicted men and women as partners in their attacks on minority groups. The "Aryan Coloring Book" contained many examples of this practice. Surrounded by weapons and standing side-by-side with Viking men who were valorized for their combat, these drawings glorified the position of "warrior" for women. One drawing, submitted by POW James A. Smith, displayed a sketch of a Viking man and woman side by side. They are both roughly equal in size, with similar long hair and horned helmets.[29] In a similar image captioned "Aryan men and women stand united!," a Viking woman and man stand roughly side by, although the woman is positioned slightly in the foreground. The couple is surrounded by various weapons, including an axe, Nazi shield, Viking war boat, and flail.[30] Members of the AWL included this image in correspondence to interested parties who wrote to the League for more information, with the different caption "white revolution is the only solution!"[31] As the League promoted this image of an Aryan woman warrior, they integrated into the WPM the expectation that women needed to act on equal footing as men in order to successfully bring about the revolution they sought against nonwhite people.

Women's Violent Actions

Yet when they translated the ideology of Aryan women warriors into a lived reality, white women who committed violence did so by providing aid to movement men primarily in a "supporting role." They worked with white men to plan and engage in criminal activity, and

[29] Aryan Coloring Book, 4.
[30] Ibid., 13.
[31] Aryan Women's League, "Ephemeral Materials."

while they did not always "pull the trigger" or plant the bomb, they still participated in roles that fostered violence aimed at minority communities. From supplying weapons to hiding evidence to cheering on their men, the women's work extended the idea of acting as a "support group" beyond the domestic sphere and on to the battlefield for white revolution.

The League had connections to those who participated in violence as an affiliate of WAR, a group certainly not a stranger to violent actions or hate crimes. Tom Metzger, the organization's head, vociferously endorsed violence as a necessary tactic for white supremacists.[32] Another WAR member, Tony McAleer, shone further light about how women affiliated with that group engaged in violence. He did this partially by describing in his memoir how men viewed women in the movement. On one hand, McAleer wrote that men pigeonholed women into roles of worshiped mothers in "a very patronizing way, in which they were treated like second-class citizens."[33] On the other hand, McAleer wrote of how men only respected women "who could fight, and they were recognized and valued for their toughness, for their capacity for violence, not for their humanity."[34] The female Chelsea skinheads who worked with WAR, for example, sometimes helped in the skirmishes that McAleer and other men instigated. In one altercation at his high school, he recalled how male and female members of his skinhead gang showed up to provide back up. When the police arrived, the men gave their girlfriends weapons to hide.[35] Here, the Chelseas acted in a supporting role by covering the tracks of the skinhead men who had actually been involved in the altercation, trying to protect them from arrest.

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[32] *WAR,* July 1995, 10, RH WL G2157 Folder 1, WAR Newsletters, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.
[33] McAleer, *The Cure for Hate*, 101.
[34] Ibid., 101.
[35] Ibid., 55.

WAR came under intense and nationwide scrutiny after skinheads they had radicalized killed Muguleta Seraw, an Ethiopian immigrant beaten to death by Kenneth Mieske ("Ken Death," and a POW listed in the AWL's publication), Kyle Brewster (also an AWL POW), and Steve Strasser on November 13th, 1988. This incident paralleled the historical violence long employed against Black men in defense of white womanhood. While police only arrested these men, their skinhead girlfriends figured prominently in the murder. At the time of the incident, the three had been driving back from a party with their girlfriends Julie, Patty, and Heidi. Seraw's friends, whose car had stalled in the road, and the skinheads exchanged insults, including expletives aimed at the girlfriends.[36] Patty had been driving at the time of the incident, and notably goaded "WELL, aren't you going to do something about it, Ken?" as the deadly street fight broke out.[37] Her call for Ken to defend her against a Black man, as well as the girlfriends' cheers during the deadly beating, provided rational for the three men to attack Seraw, tying the three women to the murder even though they did not attack him.

After the murder, Patty and Ken attempted to burn the bat used in the beating, but her aid was not enough to shield Mieske or the others from arrest.[38] Seraw's uncle brought a wrongful death civil suit against Tom Metzger, his son John, and other WAR affiliates, claiming that they had "sent their agents … to Portland for the express purpose of encouraging and rendering substantial assistance to East Side White Pride," the skinhead gang that Mieske, Brewer, and Strasser had joined, in order to "pursue white supremacist goals through violent means."[39] At the end of the trial in 1990, the court required that the various defendants to pay $12.5 million, a

[36] Elinor Langer, *A Hundred Little Hitlers: The Death of a Black Man, The Trial of a White Racist, and the Rise of the Neo-Nazi Movement in America*. (New York: Henry Holt and Company, LLC, 2003), 33.
[37] Ibid., 34.
[38] Ibid., 306.
[39] Ibid., 307.

record settlement for a racial hate crime nationwide.[40] While Patty, Julie, and Heidi did not beat Seraw themselves, their goading after his friends insulted them contributed to his death. Through their encouragement, these women acted as Aryan women warriors to support their boyfriends in the conduction of this crime. Further, Patty's involvement in destroying evidence related to the crime displayed the ways that white women helped to cover up crimes in an attempt to shield and protect movement men from arrest.

Women's silence when questioned by authorities also served to aid movement men. On September 15th, 1990, an unknown person placed a mysterious pipe bomb near the entrance to the San Diego Federal Courthouse. When the bomb went off, two doors to the building were damaged but there were no injuries or fatalities. In California authorities' quest to find the perpetrators, Tom Metzger and his associates once again came under close scrutiny. He and nine others were brought before a grand jury to be interrogated about their alleged role in the bombing. One woman, who only identified herself as "Monique" and a member of the AWL from Fallbrook, California, refused to testify, alongside the others questioned.[41] Although another suspect was eventually arrested and convicted for his involvement with the plot, the suspicion that authorities had towards both Metzger and "Monique" (presumably Monique Wolfing) indicated that women and men could have been involved with the operation. Further, her refusal to testify before the court and risk contempt of court charges on Metzger's behalf demonstrated her willingness to protect him from the court system.

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[40] "Kyle Brewster, convicted in notorious 1988 hate crime killing, seen at pro-Trump rallies in Salem, Portland," *The Oregonian*, January 19, 2021, https://www.oregonlive.com/news/2021/01/kyle-brewster-convicted-in-notorious-1988-hate-crime-killing-seen-at-pro-trump-rallies-in-salem-portland.html.

[41] Philip J. LaVelle, "Metzger, Followers Take 5th in Courthouse Bomb Probe," *The San Diego Union-Tribune*, December 21, 1990.

Although she was not a member of the AWL, Angela King's story similarly shows how white women justified their violence by rationalizing the sexual threat Jews and perceived others allegedly posed to them. Before her arrest, King had been tied to "demonstrations, racist propaganda, beatings, and at least one murder" as a part of her skinhead gang, with connections to the World Church of the Creator.[42] King, along with fellow skinheads Don Hansard, Dawn Witherspoon, and her boyfriend Raymond Leone, robbed a Florida Exotic Video store owned by a Jewish man on March 29th, 1998. According to newspaper reports of the incident, Witherspoon had allegedly supplied the gun and the car used in the attack; King "went along as a lookout."[43] Leone entered the store, pistol-whipped the owner, stole $400, and rationalized the crime as acceptable because of the man's religion and the sexual depravity of his business.[44] King plead guilty to conspiracy and robbery charges in the aftermath of the incident.[45]

The retellings by King herself, however, reveal a story that more directly implicated her in the everyday violence that marked skinhead culture. Before the robbery, she told Claire Bates of the BBC about an encounter steeped in violence that all members took part in, regardless of gender. At a bar prior to the robbery, King and another woman beat up the female companion of a man who had insulted King's boyfriend. During the attack, King had been armed with a 9mm pistol.[46] After that encounter, the four decided to rob someone. Originally, the video store was not their first target. Instead, they had initially sought to target a convenience store that closed while they argued amongst themselves over who should go in.[47] After leaving the movement, King reflected on herself as a violent woman taking her anger out on the world and hurting

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[42] Larry Lebowitz, "Group Faces More Hate Crime Charges," *Sun Sentinel*, November 13, 1998.
[43] Henry Fitzgerald, "3 Neo-Nazis Plead Innocent in Robbery," *Sun Sentinel*, October 6, 1998.
[44] Ricky Jervis and Johnny Diaz, "4 in Alleged Hate Group Indicted in Robbery," *Miami Herald* October 3, 1998.
[45] Larry Lebowitz, "Woman Pleads Guilty to Role in Robbery and Beating," *Sun Sentinel*, December 4, 1998.
[46] Claire Bates, "I Was a Neo-Nazi. Then I Fell in Love with a Black Woman," BBC News, August 29, 2017, https://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-40779377.
[47] Ibid.

innocent people. Her story provided a glimpse into the supporting roles of women as a part of the WPM. Witherspoon provided supplies; King provided muscle in the lead-up; and both women planned and indicated willingness to go ahead with the robbery against a business that they believed profited off of immorality.

Likewise, members of WAR worked with women to plot and commit violent crimes, and these women often provided essential aid in these acts. For example, Jared Alan Duplex, a WAR member, colluded with Christopher Tolliver, Shannett Clark, and Rebekah Dawson to ambush, intimidate, and rob Randy Kelley, Chris Dye, and Oliver Phillips in 2006. Clark and Dawson flirted with the victims, before suggesting that they travel to the Green Tree Inn for a "pajama party."[48] Here, the women did not conform to traditional sexual roles expected from women in the movement. In the name of advancing the cause, they promised to perform taboo acts.

En route to the motel, Clark called Duplex to report the type of car they drove in. Upon their arrival, Duplex and Tolliver blocked their car with a white Ford Escort and ordered the women to leave. Once they did, Duplex and Tolliver threatened the men with a firearm and what looked to be a police baton, demanding money before leaving in a white Ford Escort. Clark, engaged to Tolliver at the time, testified against Duplex pursuant to a plea bargain.[49] She played a critical role in the execution and design of the crime. According to her testimony, Clark identified herself as a key planner of the crime. That Duplex used Clark's car as the primary vehicle and Tolliver brandished Clark's firearm during the robbery supports her claim.[50] Clark further provided key materials necessary to pull off this violent crime. Her role, as well as Dawson's, in the crime's execution is unmistakably gendered. A couple of "honeypots"

[48] The People v. Jared Alan Duplex, 2006 Cal. App.
[49] Ibid.
[50] Ibid.

designed to "engag[e] three targets in conversation and lur[e] them outside," the two women did not actually partake in the violence of the actual robbery.[51] However, without their help, Duplex and Tolliver would not have had an intimidating weapon, vehicle, or "bait" to pull off the robbery. Women were essential to this crime.

Jill Rineman's story best captures how members of the AWL engaged in movement violence on behalf of the WPM. Jill and her husband Geremy had been married at an Oklahoma Aryan Fest in 1990, and Tom Metzger himself officiated the ceremony.[52] During the winter of 1991, the AWL supported her and her husband by writing complimentary articles about the couple and by requesting for donations for them. One article featured a picture of a Viking woman, snarling and armed to the teeth with the caption, "death before surrender!"[53] The AWL urged their readers to boycott a specific supermarket after an alleged attack on Geremy Rineman occurred there on October 14, 1989.[54] According to the AWL, the store was "directly responsible" for the "employees and gang members who just happened to have guns" and who attacked Rineman and his friends while they were "innocently shopping."[55] Other non-white power sources claimed that Rineman's spinal cord had been severed as a result of this fight, and they contended that it was "[Rineman] and his skinhead friends" who "started a fight with Latinos" at the store.[56] By contrast, the AWL offered a sanitized description of the brawl and called for readers to help the couple "in their time of need" by donating money and by boycotting the supermarket.[57] In line with their roles as white sisters, the AWL asked readers to help the Rinemans through monetary donations, not violent revenge.

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[51] Ibid.
[52] "State of the Union," *Searchlight Magazine*, September 1993.
[53] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 2, 5.
[54] Tracey Eaton, "White-Supremacists Arrest a Setup?," *The Orange County Register*, July 17, 1993.
[55] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 2, 5.
[56] "State of the Union," *Searchlight Magazine*, September 1993.
[57] *White Sisters*, Issue No. 2, 5.

This message of support and white sisterhood extended to articles that Jill Rineman contributed to *White Sisters*. While Rineman did not mention the alleged attack, she wrote about how "Aryan Women must always realize the sacrifice that our men make for us."[58] Rineman noted that male movement members "constantly" risk their lives "doing the things that are just not in [women's] place."[59] She urged other women in the movement to "stand by our men and never betray or fall away … we must be behind our men 100%!"[60] Rineman took the position that there are some activities that a woman should not engage in, including criminal acts of violence. Instead, she advocated along the AWL's party line for Aryan women to support male members who are supposed to fight.

In spite of her claims in *White Sisters*, Jill Rineman still acted as a violent Aryan woman warrior who targeted people of color. In fact, police arrested "Jill Scarbourgh," likely Jill Rineman under her maiden name, for her connections to Geremy Rineman and a plot to murder prominent Black leaders in 1993. Geremy and Jill, described as his "commonlaw wife," were both among those arrested in connection to a plot to attack Rodney King, the First African Methodist Episcopal Church, and other Black leaders in Los Angeles in 1993.[61] King, a Black man whose beating at the hands of the Los Angeles Police Department led directly to the Los Angeles Riots in 1992, without a doubt would be viewed as a sexual threat by the AWL. Their other targets included important institutions and leaders in the Black community, with the intention of "trigger[ing] a race war."[62] All of those involved had ties to a variety of groups within the WPM, including WAR, the Church of the Creator, and the Fourth Reich Skinheads.

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[58] Ibid., 9.
[59] Ibid., 9.
[60] Ibid., 9.
[61] Linda Deutsch, "8 Accused of Plotting Race War Skinheads Targeted King, Black Church, Police Say," *Phoenix Gazette*, July 6, 1993.
[62] Jim Newton, "Alleged White Supremacists Seized in Assassination Plots," *The Los Angeles Times*, July 16, 1993.

The authorities arrested Rineman and "Scarborough" on weapons violations and charged them with "possessing an unregistered Remington short-barreled shotgun." During the investigation, Jill Rineman had also displayed other unregistered weapons to police informants.[63] She and her husband had sold two informants the shotgun on November 24th, 1991. They later sold dozens of illegal arms.[64] Jill eventually pled guilty to the possession of an unregulated sawed-off shotgun and was recommended to serve only one year's probation, during which time she had to undergo treatment for drug abuse.[65] Given the paralysis that Geremy had suffered, he needed Jill's complete support in movement activities in order to continue his participation. While the majority of the blame to assassinate prominent leaders eventually fell to Christopher Fisher of the Fourth Reich Skinheads, Jill Rineman nevertheless provided weapons.

Another woman, Doris Nadal, and her husband Chris were also implicated in the plot to make and transfer illegal weapons. Nadal claimed ignorance of the plans to attack King and the church, complaining to a reporter that "we're just normal people … . I mean, my husband just ordered some gun kits from a catalogue and we wind up on TV like we're the world's No. 1 criminals."[66] Despite her pleas, other reports indicated that her husband, who had a small plane with a swastika its side, held racist views in line with the WPM.[67] Further, reports indicated that Doris and Chris worked with Jill and Geremy to find new weapons customers.[68] Jill and Doris had worked with their partners and in support of other men who had intentions of violently attacking members and symbols of the Black and Jewish communities.

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[63] Ibid.
[64] Jim Newton, "Hate Group Was Shadowed by Mysterious Informant," *The Los Angeles Times*, July 18, 1993.
[65] "Woman Pleads Guilty to Gun Possession," *The Orange County Register*, December 7, 1993.
[66] Jim Newton, "Grand Jury Indicts 4 Suspects for Hate Crimes, Weapons Charges," *The Los Angeles Times*, July 30, 1993.
[67] "State of the Union," *Searchlight Magazine*, September 1993.
[68] Ibid.

White Women as Victims of Movement Violence

Women in the WPM participated in violence against ethnic and religious minorities, yet they themselves sometimes fell victim to violence inflicted on them by the white men they swore to support. Although they frequently believed nonwhite men posed the biggest threats to them, they often faced danger from their racist male comrades. Given the widespread misogyny among men in the WPM and the strict gender roles that many, including members of the AWL, promoted, this comes as little surprise. League members tried to present to the world a positive view of life as a woman in the WPM, which could lead to a fulfilling and happy life fighting for the white race. However, the consistent examples of disrespect and domestic violence serve as a stark reminder that, no matter what the AWL and their supporters professed, men subjected these women to verbal and physical abuse on the basis of their gender.

Generally speaking, men in groups such as WAR viewed themselves as "warriors" meant to fight for the white race and protect white women from incoming threats. Yet in the broader WPM, men brushed off the importance of what they viewed as "women's issues." One male leader, when discussing the inclusion of women in the group, lamented that "any discussion of women's rights and feminism within the Movement usually ends abortively with the unchallenged assertion that the whole topic is an artificial one concocted by Jewish communist lesbians to further divide and weaken the White race."[69] On one hand, this attitude helped to explain why members of the League felt a separate organization dedicated to "women's issues" would be a necessary improvement to movement life for women. Yet herein also lies a major problem that the AWL struggled to overcome. Women in the group tried to work within a belief system that consistently denigrated their work as a "supporting role." By playing into this idea,

[69] Blee, *Inside Organized Racism*, 146.

female activists were always supporting actors subjected to the decisions and power of those who they attempted to support.

For a variety of reasons, women often remained quiet on whether or not they had been subjected to domestic violence. Their role in volent extremism meant that many avenues that women used to escape dangerous relationships, such as going to the police, remained closed to them. Furthermore, they feared reprisals from others in their groups. When sociologist Kathleen Blee spoke with several racist women in the late 1990s, some of her interviewees "talked about feeling threatened by their male racist comrades. Several told of being beaten by racist boyfriends or husbands."[70] During her interviews, Blee could not find substantial evidence that women in the WPM were more likely than non-racist counterparts to become victims of domestic violence, in spite of the stereotype of women in the movement as people who only stayed because of threats posed to them by husbands and boyfriends.[71] Yet some of the women gave gruesome accounts of violence. One woman shared that a good friend was hospitalized after she "had a hammer put through her head by [a male skinhead]."[72] In spite of men's insistence on protecting white womanhood, they were significant threats to women's safety.

Men sometimes used infidelity to justify abuse. If women failed to remain loyal to the men they partnered with, they risked becoming the target of violence. One skinhead woman, interviewed by sociologist Mark Hamm in the 1990s, remembered the dangers women faced if they cheated on their partners or broke up couples. She recounted how one girl slept with a married man in her skinhead gang and "got her ass kicked."[73] While the woman suffered at the

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[70] Ibid., 151.
[71] Ibid., 151.
[72] Ibid., 182.
[73] Mark S. Hamm, *American Skinheads: The Criminology and Control of Hate Crime* (Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Publishing Group, 1993), 176.

hands of the group members, no testimony indicated that a hypothetical man who cheated on his wife would face similar repercussions. Further, the woman described her organization as having "a moderate level of conflict" in light of this one event, which implied that other skinhead groups engaged in more violent action towards women regarding sexual promiscuity. Preoccupied with the threat of rape from Black men, the possibility of violence from white men in the movement remained a secondary concern to white women.

If white women forewent their supporting roles and betrayed members of the movement, the consequences they faced were likewise brutal. Rebekah Dawson, the woman who helped Shanett Clark lure their targets to awaiting robbers, experienced abuse and intimidation. Even though both women testified against Jared Alan Duplex, the WAR defendant, only Rebekah suffered serious repercussions for her involvement. As a result of her testimony, WAR members began to harass and threaten her. Rebekah suffered a mental breakdown and went into hiding for the remainder of the trial.[74] Dawson did not remain silent in spite of the risk to her, as "Monique" had previously done for Tom Metzger when WAR had been under investigation for a bombing. Instead of silently supporting the men in WAR, she decided to speak and testify against Duplex, helping to ensure his imprisonment. For stepping out of line, Dawson suffered mental anguish and threats of violence.

Conclusion

Members of the League justified their expanded role as "warriors" by defining nonwhite men as significant sexual threats to women and the purity of the white race. Given the records currently available, women in the WPM did not "pull the trigger" when participating in violent

[74] People v. Duplex.

crime as often as their male counterparts did. Yet the women of the League did not view direct involvement in violence as something absolutely central to their role as women in the fight for their race's survival. Instead, women aided movement men in these crimes, staying away from directly engaging in violent activity while still helping to facilitate it. Acting in this way represented a continuation of their "support group" status, allowing them to navigate participation in warrior culture while adhering to the gender roles they recognized and upheld.

When women failed to adhere to those roles in practice, however, the consequences could be dire for their own safety. Many of the AWL's members believed that the alleged threats of nonwhite men to their families and bodies justified their violence, yet they struggled to explain the dangers in their own ranks. Although the harm that these activists inflicted on communities of color cannot be understated, these women also experienced derision and abuse from the men they claimed to support. By working as part of "support groups," these women had limited ways that they could effectively challenge misogynistic viewpoints or stop domestic violence.

Epilogue

Loving Your Own Kind: How the Work of the AWL Lives on Today

While the AWL is no longer an active hate group, women still promote the ideas that it stood for in the present day. How the organization fell apart remains a matter of contention among scholars studying the WPM. Most academic works mentioning the League do not include a time frame for the organization's decline. One scholar, Jesse Daniels, went so far as to claim that the League was "defunct" by 1991.[1] However, other publications contest this claim. AWL materials held by the Anti-Defamation League's archives suggest that the League actively continued publishing *White Sisters* and recruiting members at least into 1994.[2] Martin Durham suggested more broadly that "the Aryan Women's League did not survive the 1990s."[3] In 2000, journalist Kate Taylor claimed that the AWL was one "of the most prominent" women's hate groups in the United States.[4] WAR also continued advertising the League through at least October of 2004 in *WAR* by selling tapes of *Race and Reason* featuring an "Aryan Women's League Representative." [5]

While the reasons for the League's decline are not currently understood, the 1990s clearly presented major problems for their allies in WAR. In October 1990, a jury ordered Metzger, his son, and WAR to pay a record $12.5 million dollars for the death of Mulugeta Seraw. Metzger and his wife had to vacate their Fallbrook home of twenty years. Kathy, Tom's wife and an alleged leader of the AWL, applied for the couple to move to the Valley Oaks Mobile Ranch on the southeast side of Fallbrook at the time. Kathy claimed a monthly income of $2000 as an

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[1] Daniels, *White Lies*, Footnote 8 on 158.
[2] Blee, *Inside Organized Racism*, Notes 66, 71, 72 on page 232.
[3] Durham, *White Rage*, 97.
[4] Kate Taylor, "Breeders for the White Race," *Searchlight Magazine*, January 2000.
[5] *WAR,* October 2004, 16, RH WL G2157 Folder 2, WAR Newsletters, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

employee of White Point Publishing, the company that published *WAR*.[6] This income did not prove sufficient for the park, which denied the Metzger family access on the basis that "they [didn't] have any money."[7] In addition to the financial woes that WAR faced, authorities arrested and convicted Tom Metzger in 1991 for his participation in a 1983 cross burning.[8] Even though WAR continued publishing material and engaging in white power activities at least until 2004, the challenges faced by the leader likely undermined the functioning of groups like the Aryan Women's League.

More troubles ensued for WAR and the AWL when Kathy Metzger died on March 4th, 1992.[9] Superior Court Judge J. D. Smith – "solely out of compassion for Mrs. Metzger" – released Tom from his 1983 cross burning sentence to be with her as she passed.[10] Tom mourned that "there wasn't a much better woman than her," remembering the support she had given him throughout their 28 years of marriage.[11] Although her daughter, Lynn, had been a "mainstay" of the AWL by the fall of 1989, her mother's death plausibly had a lasting impact on the family.[12] In the March 1997 edition of WAR, her picture, birth, and death dates appeared, commemorating the five-year anniversary of her passing.[13] Like Tom Metzger's imprisonment, Kathy Metzger's death likely hurt the AWL by leaving a vacuum of leadership for others to fill.

In spite of these challenges and the gradual decline of the AWL, the ideas League members advocated for remain key to racist white women today. The next generation of women

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[6] Tom Gorman, "Metzger Finds Door Closed at Mobile Home Park Since He Lacks Income," *The Los Angeles Times*, October 9, 1991.
[7] Ibid.
[8] "Kathleen Metzger," *San Francisco Chronicle*, March 6, 1992.
[9] Ibid.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid.
[12] Langer, *A Hundred Little Hitlers*, 148.
[13] *WAR*, March 1997, 1, RH WL G2157 Folder 2, WAR Newsletters, Spencer Research Library, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.

in the hate movement in the 2010s drew on the AWL's practices. Women currently involved in racist activism still advocate the benefits of reproductive labor while facilitating "behind the scenes" organizational work.[14] One woman dedicated to the ideal of large, happy white families is Ayla Stewart, a proud "tradwife" and mother of six. Once an outspoken feminist, Stewart claimed in 2017 to have realized that "America's raging liberal culture had taught her to hate herself, her femininity, and her race."[15] She posted frequently to social media and YouTube about her life and beliefs, in one instance issuing a "white baby challenge" to her followers following remarks from Representative Steve King that "it was impossible to restore our civilization" with "somebody else's babies."[16]

Running through her story is the complaint that "the Nazi flags, the racist slurs, the violent things said on Discord – none of that mattered in comparison to white birth rates and loving your own kind."[17] She intended to deliver a speech at the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, Virginia on this topic, encouraging reproductive labor among women while downplaying the uglier aspects of hate. She spoke with the organizers over Discord and traveled to the event with her family. Only last-minute fears about the increasing violence in the crowd convinced her to remain in her hotel room (although her husband and son did join the fray).[18] In a separate social media post, she delivered her speech, asking "what could possibly be controversial about" advocating for love within your own race.[19] She ended her speech with this exhortation: "Tell me, *please*… . It's ridiculous."[20]

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[14] "Seyward Darby Delves Into Women's Role in the Far-Right Movement," NPR, January 9, 2021, https://www.npr.org/2021/01/09/955191984/seyward-darby-delves-into-womens-role-in-the-far-right-movement.
[15] Darby, *Sisters in Hate*, 98.
[16] Ibid., 160.
[17] Ibid., 176.
[18] Ibid., 158.
[19] Ibid., 176.
[20] Ibid., 176.

Her story of denied womanhood at the hands of "raging liberals" exemplifies the contradiction that plagues scholars studying these women: why would they join a movement so antithetical to their interests as women? In part, they did so because they believe far-right and racist organizations protect their interests as women. This is key to understanding why women engaged with these groups even when people on the outside cannot fathom why they would join an organization so antithetical to their benefit. These women claimed that the most important threat to their lives came not from white men forcing them into subservient positions, but from the threat that "the left" posed. Now more outspoken and with Internet platforms to reach exponentially more people, these women's virulent racism and simple answers to complex questions of race, gender, and a rapidly changing country continue to stoke violence two decades after the AWL's decline.

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